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LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

by AŚVAGHOṢA

TRANSLATED BY

Patrick Olivelle



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CSL CONVENTIONS

Sanskrit Alphabetical Order

Vowels:	<i>a ä i ü r ï l l e ai o au m b</i>
Gutturals:	<i>k kh g gh n</i>
Palatals:	<i>c ch j jh ñ</i>
Retroflex:	<i>t̪ th̪ d̪ dh̪ ñ̪</i>
Dentals:	<i>t̪ th̪ d̪ dh̪ n̪</i>
Labials:	<i>p ph̪ b bb̪ m</i>
Semivowels:	<i>y r l v</i>
Spirants:	<i>ss s h</i>

Guide to Sanskrit Pronunciation

<i>a</i>	but	<i>loch</i> , or an aspiration with a faint echoing of the last element of the preceding vowel so that <i>taih</i> is pronounced <i>taihⁱ</i>
<i>ā, ā̄</i>	father	
<i>i</i>	sit	
<i>ī, ī̄</i>	fee	
<i>u</i>	put	
<i>ū, ū̄</i>	boo	<i>k</i>
<i>r</i>	vocalic <i>r</i> , American <i>pur-dy</i> or English <i>pretty</i>	<i>kh</i>
<i>ř</i>	lengthened <i>r</i>	<i>g</i>
<i>!</i>	vocalic <i>l</i> , <i>able</i>	<i>gh</i>
<i>e, ē, ē̄</i>	made, esp. in Welsh pronunciation	<i>n</i>
<i>ai</i>	bite	<i>c</i>
<i>o, ô, ô̄</i>	rope, esp. Welsh pronunciation; Italian <i>solo</i>	<i>ch</i>
<i>au</i>	sound	<i>j</i>
<i>m̄</i>	<i>anusvāra</i> nasalizes the preceding vowel	<i>jh</i>
<i>h̄</i>	<i>visarga</i> , a voiceless aspiration (resembling the English <i>h</i>), or like Scottish	<i>ñ</i>
		<i>t̄</i>
		<i>th̄</i>
		<i>d̄</i>

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	of tongue turned up to touch the hard palate)	<i>b</i>	before
<i>dh</i>	same as the preceding but aspirated	<i>bh</i>	abhorrent
<i>n̥</i>	retroflex <i>n</i> (with the tip of tongue turned up to touch the hard palate)	<i>m</i>	mind
<i>t̥</i>	French <i>tout</i>	<i>y</i>	yes
<i>th̥</i>	tent hook	<i>r</i>	trilled, resembling the Ita- lian pronunciation of <i>r</i>
<i>d̥</i>	dinner	<i>l̥</i>	<i>linger</i>
<i>dh̥</i>	guildhall	<i>v̥</i>	word
<i>n̥̥</i>	now	<i>s̥</i>	shore
<i>p̥</i>	pill	<i>ʃ̥</i>	retroflex <i>sh</i> (with the tip of the tongue turned up to touch the hard palate)
<i>ph̥</i>	upheaval	<i>s̥̥</i>	hiss
		<i>h̥</i>	hood

CSL Punctuation of English

The acute accent on Sanskrit words when they occur outside of the Sanskrit text itself, marks stress, e.g., Ramáyana. It is not part of traditional Sanskrit orthography, transliteration, or transcription, but we supply it here to guide readers in the pronunciation of these unfamiliar words. Since no Sanskrit word is accented on the last syllable it is not necessary to accent disyllables, e.g., Rama.

The second CSL innovation designed to assist the reader in the pronunciation of lengthy unfamiliar words is to insert an unobtrusive middle dot between semantic word breaks in compound names (provided the word break does not fall on a vowel resulting from the fusion of two vowels), e.g., Maha·bhárata, but Ramáyana (not Rama·áyana). Our dot echoes the punctuating middle dot (·) found in the oldest surviving samples of written Indic, the Ashokan inscriptions of the third century BCE.

The deep layering of Sanskrit narrative has also dictated that we use quotation marks only to announce the beginning and end of every direct speech, and not at the beginning of every paragraph.

CSL Punctuation of Sanskrit

The Sanskrit text is also punctuated, in accordance with the punctuation of the English translation. In mid-verse, the punctuation will not alter the sandhi or the scansion. Proper names are capitalized. Most Sanskrit meters have four “feet” (*pāda*); where possible we print the common *śloka* meter on two lines. In the Sanskrit text, we use French *Guillemets* (e.g., «*kva saṃcīcīrsuh?*») instead of English quotation marks (e.g., “Where are you off to?”) to avoid confusion with the apostrophes used for vowel elision in sandhi.

SANDHI

Sanskrit presents the learner with a challenge: *sandhi* (euphonic combination). Sandhi means that when two words are joined in connected speech or writing (which in Sanskrit reflects speech), the last letter (or even letters) of the first word often changes; compare the way we pronounce “the” in “the beginning” and “the end.”

In Sanskrit the first letter of the second word may also change; and if both the last letter of the first word and the first letter of the second are vowels, they may fuse. This has a parallel in English: a nasal consonant is inserted between two vowels that would otherwise coalesce: “a pear” and “an apple.” Sanskrit vowel fusion may produce ambiguity.

The charts on the following pages give the full sandhi system.

Fortunately it is not necessary to know these changes in order to start reading Sanskrit. All that is important to know is the form of the second word without sandhi (pre-sandhi), so that it can be recognized or looked up in a dictionary. Therefore we are printing Sanskrit with a system of punctuation that will indicate, unambiguously, the original form of the second word, i.e., the form without sandhi. Such sandhi mostly concerns the fusion of two vowels.

In Sanskrit, vowels may be short or long and are written differently accordingly. We follow the general convention that a vowel with no mark above it is short. Other books mark a long vowel either with a bar called a macron (ā) or with a circumflex (ā). Our system uses the

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VOWEL SANDHI

		Final vowels:					Initial vowels:				
		ū	ū	ū	ū	ū	a'	ā	ā	ā	ā
'â	"â	yâ	yâ	vâ	vâ	râ	e'	ââ	ââ	ââ	ââ
'ā	"ā	yā	yā	vā	vā	rā	āā	āā	āā	āā	āā
'ē	"ē	'î	"î	vî	vî	rî	ai	âî	âî	âî	âî
'ē	"ē	'î	"î	vî	vî	rî	âî	âî	âî	âî	âî
'ô	"ô	yû	yû	'û	"û	rû	au	âu	âu	âu	âu
'ō	"ō	yû	yû	'û	"û	rû	âû	âû	âû	âû	âû
a'r	a"r	yř	yř	vř	vř	rř	âř	âř	âř	âř	âř
'âi	"âi	yé	yé	ve	ve	re	ae	âe	âe	âe	âe
'âi	"âi	yai	yai	vai	vai	rai	aai	âai	âai	âai	âai
'âu	"âu	yô	yô	vo	vo	ro	ao	âo	âo	âo	âo
'âu	"âu	yau	yau	vau	vau	rau	au	âau	âau	âau	âau

CSL CONVENTIONS

CONSONANT SANDHI

¹h, or r disappears, and if a/i/u precedes, this lengthens to ā/ī/ū. ²e.g. tān+lokān=tāī lokān.

¹h or r disappears, and if a/i/u precedes, this lengthens to ā/ī/ū. ²e.g. tāñ-
³The doubling occurs if the preceding vowel is short. ⁴Except: ah+a=o'.

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macron, except that for initial vowels in sandhi we use a circumflex to indicate that originally the vowel was short, or the shorter of two possibilities (*e* rather than *ai*, *o* rather than *au*).

When we print initial \hat{a} , before sandhi that vowel was *a*

\hat{i} or \hat{e} ,	<i>i</i>
\hat{u} or \hat{o} ,	<i>u</i>
\hat{ai} ,	<i>e</i>
\hat{au} ,	<i>o</i>
$\hat{\alpha}$,	\bar{a}
\hat{i} ,	\bar{i}
\hat{u} ,	\bar{u}
\hat{e} ,	\bar{i}
\hat{o} ,	\bar{u}
\hat{ai} ,	<i>ai</i>
\hat{au} ,	<i>au</i>

', before sandhi there was a vowel *a*

When a final short vowel (*a*, *i*, or *u*) has merged into a following vowel, we print ' at the end of the word, and when a final long vowel (\hat{a} , *i*, or \hat{u}) has merged into a following vowel we print " at the end of the word. The vast majority of these cases will concern a final *a* or \hat{a} . See, for instance, the following examples:

What before sandhi was *atra asti* is represented as *atr' āsti*

<i>atra āste</i>	<i>atr' āste</i>
<i>kanyā asti</i>	<i>kany" āsti</i>
<i>kanyā āste</i>	<i>kany" āste</i>
<i>atra iti</i>	<i>atr' ēti</i>
<i>kanyā iti</i>	<i>kany" ēti</i>
<i>kanyā īpsitā</i>	<i>kany" īpsitā</i>

Finally, three other points concerning the initial letter of the second word:

(1) A word that before sandhi begins with *r* (vowel), after sandhi begins with *r* followed by a consonant: *yatha" rtu* represents pre-sandhi *yathā rtu*.

(2) When before sandhi the previous word ends in *t* and the following word begins with *s*, after sandhi the last letter of the previous word is *c*

and the following word begins with *ch*: *syāc chāstravit* represents pre-sandhi *syāt śāstravit*.

(3) Where a word begins with *h* and the previous word ends with a double consonant, this is our simplified spelling to show the pre-sandhi form: *tad hasati* is commonly written as *tad dhasati*, but we write *tadd hasati* so that the original initial letter is obvious.

COMPOUNDS

We also punctuate the division of compounds (*samāsa*), simply by inserting a thin vertical line between words. There are words where the decision whether to regard them as compounds is arbitrary. Our principle has been to try to guide readers to the correct dictionary entries.

Exemplar of CSL Style

Where the Devanagari script reads:

कुम्भस्थली रक्षतु वो विकीर्णसिन्धूररेणुद्विरदाननस्य ।
प्रशान्तये विघ्नतमश्छटानां निष्ठ्यूतबालातपपल्लवेव ॥

Others would print:

kumbhasthalī rakṣatu vo vikīrṇasindūra|reṇur dviradānanasya /
prashāntaye vighnatamaśchaṭānām niṣṭhyūtabālātapapallaveva //

We print:

kumbha|sthali rakṣatu vo vikīrṇa|sindūra|reṇur dvirad'|ānanasya
prashāntaye vighna|tamaś|chaṭānām niṣṭhyūta|bāl'|ātapa|pallav" ēva.

And in English:

May Ganésha's domed forehead protect you! Streaked with vermillion dust, it seems to be emitting the spreading rays of the rising sun to pacify the teeming darkness of obstructions.

("Nava-sáhasanka and the Serpent Princess" 1.3)



P R E F A C E

THIS PROJECT started with a casual conversation with Richard Gombrich several years ago in which I expressed an interest in translating the *Buddhacarita* for the Clay Sanskrit Library series. Richard probably took my comments more seriously than I did at the time, and several months later asked me whether I was still interested in this translation. I am grateful to Richard for giving this project to me; it has been such a fun assignment and a great learning experience.

Many individuals helped me with this translation, sharing their knowledge and expertise. I am grateful to the students in my advanced Sanskrit seminar in the Fall of 2006 with whom I read the first four chapters of the *Buddhacarita*: Ishan Chakrabarti, Matthew Dasti, Justin Fifield, Christopher Handy, Peter Knapczyk, Elliott McCarter, Urmila Patil, and Vijay Patisapu. They provided me with valuable insights and helped me fine-tune the translation. Alf Hiltebeitel was already working on the concept of dharma in the *Buddhacarita* and Ashva·ghosha's knowledge of the epics, and he shared his knowledge and writing with me. Other friends who assisted me in various ways include Joel Brereton, Oliver Freiberger, and Gregory Schopen.

My wife, Suman, as usual provided a close reading of the entire manuscript and caught numerous mistakes and typos.

To all a heartfelt thanks.

PATRICK OLIVELLE
Austin, February 2007



INTRODUCTION

A SHVA·GHOSHA, according to tradition, was a brahmin who converted to Buddhism and became a Buddhist monk. Internal evidence of his extant works shows that he was a learned man well versed both in the Brahmanical texts, mythology, ritual, and philosophy, and in Buddhist theology and history. In addition to being an erudite theologian, Ashva·ghosha was a gifted poet. In “Life of the Buddha” (*Buddhacarita*), he melds the theological and the poetic into an epic poem that presents Buddhism as the crowning and consummation of the Brahmanical religion, as the means of releasing human beings from the agony of their imprisonment in life, and as the fulfillment of all human aspirations. The poem is an “apologia” for Buddhism against Brahmanical attacks and arguments, an apologetics in the form of a finely crafted “Life of the Buddha” from his conception to his Awakening, preaching, and death.

Date and Place of Ashva·ghosha

There is a scholarly consensus that Ashva·ghosha lived in the first century CE. All the evidence for such dating comes from Ashva·ghosha’s works themselves and their relationship to other texts of the period. Many of the arguments, therefore, contain a good dose of subjectivity. The only firm date we have is derived from the Chinese translation of “Life of the Buddha” carried out around 420 CE. It is also most likely that Ashva·ghosha is considerably earlier than the most famous of the Sanskrit poets, Kali·dasa, who is dated somewhat tentatively to the fourth century CE.

A case, however, can be made that Ashva·ghosha knew Manu's work on dharma ("Manu's Code of Law," *Mānavadharmaśāstra*), which I have dated to around the second century CE (OLIVELLE 2005: 25). Twice in "Life of the Buddha" (2.16; 8.78) and once in "Handsome Nanda" (*Saundarananda*, 3.41) he compares the age of the Buddha to the golden age of Manu. Ashva·ghosha repeatedly identifies the Buddha with the sun; and he calls Manu the son of the sun. I think this juxtaposition is intentional. Ashva·ghosha compares the Buddha to Svayam·bhu, the Self-existent One (10.2, 10.19), while Manu, the author of "Manu's Code of Law," is identified as the son of Svayam·bhu. Indeed, the treatise on dharma that Manu imparted is said to have been actually composed by his father Svayam·bhu (Manu 1.3, 58). In this context, it is significant that Ashva·ghosha puts these words in the mouth of the Buddha: "I have no teacher. I have obtained Nirvana; I am not the same as others. Know that I am the Self-existent (*svayam/bhū*) with respect to dharma (15.4)." The Buddha is higher than Manu with respect to dharma; the Buddha is Svayam·bhu himself, the very author of the original treatise on dharma. The Buddha's dharma is thus the original and eternal dharma, surpassing that of Manu, which is implicitly an inferior and degenerate dharma.

A further clue comes from Ashva·ghosha's use of the theology of debt (OLIVELLE 1993: 46–53) to defend the position that a man should take to asceticism only in old age. These words are put in the mouth of the counselor of Buddha's father (9.65–66):

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*A man is released from his debts
to his ancestors through offspring,
to seers through studying the Vedas,
and to the gods through sacrifice;*

*A man is born with these three debts,
whoever has become released from these,
for him alone, they say, there is release.*

*Release is open to one, experts say,
who strives following this sequence of rules;
Those who desire release violating that sequence,
only get fatigued though they expend much effort.*

Although the theology of debt is alluded to in the “Maha-bhárata,” it is Manu who for the first time uses this theology to defend his position that the orders of life (*āśramas*) are to be followed sequentially as an individual grows old and that renunciation is limited to old age.¹ That freedom from debt is a precondition for undertaking the life of freedom (mendicancy) echoes Manu. Indeed, one can see that these two verses of Ashva-ghosha parallel the two verses of Manu (6.35–36):

*Only after he has paid his three debts,
should a man set his mind on release;
if he devotes himself to release without paying them,
he will proceed downward.*

*Only after he has studied the Vedas according to rule,
fathered sons in keeping with the Law,
and offered sacrifices according to his ability,
should a man set his mind on release.*

Note also Ashva-ghosha’s use of the term *mokṣa* (release, liberation) in the technical meaning given to it by Manu,

namely, renunciatory asceticism of a wandering mendicant (see OLIVELLE 2005: 243), rather than simply liberation from the cycle of rebirth. It appears likely that both in the theology and in the vocabulary Ashva·ghosha is here following Manu's text.

If this connection between Ashva·ghosha and Manu is accepted, then he should be assigned to the second rather than to the first century CE. Such a connection also throws light on the theological and apologetic background of Ashva·ghosha's work.

The colophons of both the poems give Sakéta, also known as Ayódhya in what is today eastern Uttar Pradesh, as the birth-place of Ashva·ghosha. The internal evidence of "Life of the Buddha" appears to support this. As JOHNSTON (1984: xvii, xlvii–l) has shown, Ashva·ghosha knew the "Ramáyana" and presents the Buddha as the new Rama. He acknowledges Valmíki as the "first poet" (1.43) and models the departure of the Buddha from his city to the forest after that of Rama. Here the Buddha is explicitly compared to Rama (8.8; 9.9):

*When the townsfolk saw the two return
without that bull of the Shakya race
and walking with their bodies drooping,
they shed tears along the path, as when
long ago the chariot of Dásharatha returned.
Then, the chaplain together with the counselor,
left the carriage and came up to him, as the sage
Aurvashéya along with Vama·deva did,
wishing to see Rama living in the forest.*

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Shuddhódana's lament is compared to that of Dasha-ratha when Rama went into exile (8.81):

*Thus did the king,
grieving at being separated from his son,
give up his innate steadfastness comparable to the earth's,
and utter countless lamentations as if he were deranged,
like Dasha-ratha over Rama, as he succumbed to grief.*

Irrespective of whether he is assigned to the first or the second century CE, Ashva-ghosha lived during a period when much of north-western and north-central India was under the rule of the Kusháñas. They were a group that invaded north-western India from central Asia and established a strong empire during the second half of the first century CE. The significant aspect of this empire is that the Kushána rulers became Buddhists and strong patrons of Buddhist institutions. We find this especially in the public visual presence of Buddhism in the architecture of the Kushána period, a time when few Hindu/Brahmanical structures were present. Foreign rule and Buddhist rule represented by the Kusháñas, including the in-your-face challenge of Buddhist public monuments, were a double challenge to the Brahmanical conception of society, kingship, and the place of the brahmin community within society.

Many rulers in the preceding four or five centuries had been partial to non-Brahmanical religious movements, especially the Buddhist. Beginning with the Maurya empire and Ashóka, the Brahmanical self-definition was increasingly challenged and their position within the socio-political structures weakened. Recent scholarship, represented by MADELEINE BIARDEAU, ALF HILTEBEITEL, and

JAMES FITZGERALD, has seen the Brahmanical epics as implicit answers to the Buddhist challenge. I have argued that the legal text of Manu should also be seen as a Brahmanical response to this challenge (OLIVELLE 2005: 37–41). This Brahmanical “counter-reformation” was bound to attract Buddhist responses, and “Life of the Buddha” can be seen as one such response. It is interesting to note that, perhaps taking a page from the early Buddhist works on the life and activities of the Buddha, the two famous Indian epics are essentially the life and deeds of Rama and Yudhiṣṭhīra, the former, significantly, the *dhārmika* (dharmic king) and the latter the son and incarnation of Dharma. We can detect a response when Ashva-ghosha calls the Buddha the image of dharma or dharma in visible form (10.6, 10.19) and explicitly identifies him with dharma (7.35).

The backdrop to Ashva-ghosha’s work, I believe, is also the contemporary socio-political reality and the Brahmanical responses, both theological and literary, to that reality. His “Life of the Buddha” can be best interpreted as an apologetic work presenting the Buddhist response to Brahmanical attacks. Ashva-ghosha was well-positioned to undertake this task, for he was clearly well-versed in Brahmanical texts, mythologies, and theologies. His audience, therefore, was not simply his fellow Buddhists but also the broader educated public of his day, especially the Brahmanical intelligentsia. The form of his response, a finely crafted epic poem, was also probably intended to reach a broad, diverse, and educated audience. Citations of his work by later writers on aesthetics and the imitation of his poems by

major Brahmanical poets, including Kali·dasa,² show that Ashva·ghosha largely achieved his aim.

Works of Ashva·ghosha

There are two extant works of Ashva·ghosha, “Life of the Buddha” and “Handsome Nanda.” Both are written in verse and intended to be poetic works (*kāvya*) of distinction. Indeed, these are the two earliest extant *kāvyas* in Sanskrit. “Handsome Nanda” is a *kāvya* in eighteen cantos narrating the story of the long and complicated path to conversion of Buddha’s half-brother Nanda and his wife Súndari. The only other work that can be confidently ascribed to Ashva·ghosha is the *kāvya Śāriputraprakaraṇa*, a play in nine acts about the conversion of the Buddha’s two chief disciples, Shari·putra and Maudgalyáyana. Only a few passages of this work are extant.

Numerous other works are attributed to Ashva·ghosha in Tibetan and Chinese traditions. The probability that any of these, which deal principally with topics of Maha·yana theology, are authentic works of our poet is extremely slim.

Considering the poetic merits of the two extant *kāvyas*, JOHNSTON (1984: xix) is of the opinion that “Handome Nanda” is the later and more developed work of Ashva·ghosha: “the handling of the *Saundarananda* is altogether more mature and assured than that of the *Buddhacarita*, whose effect is often marred by repetitions of the same words or phrases, or even of a whole *pāda*, in a way that the *kavis* of the classical age sedulously avoided.”

Theology and Apologetics of “Life of the Buddha”

Reading “Life of the Buddha” as a Buddhist response to Brahmanical challenges,³ we can detect two major thrusts in Ashva·ghosha’s argument.

First, he presents the Buddha’s doctrine, the dharma discovered through his Awakening, as the consummation of the Brahmanical religion. He reads the history of the Brahmanical tradition as a preparation for the arrival of the Buddha; Brahmanism anticipates the Buddha, and Buddhism is the fulfillment of Brahmanism. It is wrong, therefore, to place them in opposition to each other, to see them as adversaries. This is not a new argument of Ashva·ghosha; the canonical literature already presents the Buddha as the crowning of the Brahmanical tradition. Nor is this unusual in the history of religions, especially when a new religious movement seeks to define itself against an older inherited tradition. Thus, the “new testament” of the Jesus movement presented itself as the fulfillment of the prophesies embedded in the older Jewish tradition, branding its texts as the “old testament.” Coming as he does from within the Brahmanical tradition, Ashva·ghosha’s stance is quite understandable; he wants to remain both a brahmin and a Buddhist, just as the early Christians wanted to be both Jews and Christians. That Ashva·ghosha was imbued with the Brahmanical scholastic mentality and tradition is evident in his use of the expression *iti smṛtaḥ* (“such is the authoritative tradition,” or “so states an authoritative text of tradition”)⁴ so common in Brahmanical texts.

Second, Ashva·ghosha engages in a polemic against the inherited tradition, demonstrating how doctrines, divinities, and holy men of Brahmanism are defective and untrustworthy as spiritual guides. The dharma of the Buddha has not only fulfilled but also superseded the Brahmanical dharma. Ashva·ghosha has to walk a fine line in this dual argument, because the one can often undercut the other. On the one hand, Brahmanism is viewed positively as preparatory to the Buddhist message, and, on the other, it is presented as depraved, immoral, and superseded.

Ashva·ghosha, however, is careful to observe that the Buddha's dharma, although opposed to the current practices of Brahmanism, is not something entirely new and novel. It is a dharma that was discovered by past Buddhas; Siddhártha's discovery is only the most recent in a long line. His dharma, therefore, is both new and ancient. As he tells his groom Chanda (6.19):

*This was the firm resolution,
as you know, of our ancestors;
do not grieve for me as I walk
on this path, that is my patrimony.*

Buddha's Dharma as Consummation of Brahmanism

Ashva·ghosha's presentation of the Buddha's dharma as the consummation and fulfillment of the Brahmanical tradition is made implicitly and indirectly rather than openly. He does not come out directly and tell his audience that the Buddha's dharma is what brahmins have been waiting for

all these centuries. Indeed, his is the manner in which most Indian authors, especially the Brahmanical ones, deal with their opponents. Buddhism, for example, is never mentioned explicitly either in the epics or in the work of Manu; it is always in the background, and without taking into account that backdrop the full significance of the text cannot be understood.

The most explicit statements come in the narration of Siddhártha's birth. The focus is on the extraordinary marks on the baby's body, marks that Buddhist theology interpreted as the signs of a Great Man (*mahā/puruṣa*), and on the miraculous events that accompanied his birth. The first to reflect on these are learned brahmins probably attached to the royal household, and they announce (1.34–36):

*The signs on the body of this illustrious one,
with the brilliance of gold, the radiance of a lamp,
foretell that he'll be either an Awakened Seer,
or a World Conqueror on the earth among men.
Should he desire world sovereignty through
might and right,
he will stand on earth at the head of all kings,
like the light of the sun,
at the head of all heavenly lights.
Going to the forest, should he seek release,
by his knowledge and truth he will vanquish
all doctrines and stand on earth, like Meru,
the king of mountains, among all the hills.*

The seer Ásita is the second to interpret these signs. Seeing Ásita with tears in his eyes, Shuddhódana is alarmed,

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fearing a danger to his infant son. But Ásita is crying for himself, because he knows that he will die before he can hear the Buddha's dharma. Ásita predicts that the infant will become a Buddha, a Fully Awakened One (1.69–75):

*For quitting his realm, detached from pleasures,
realizing the truth through arduous efforts,
This sun of knowledge will blaze forth,
in this world to dispel
the darkness of delusion.*

*From this sea of grief,
strewn with the foam of sickness,
with waves of old age
and fearsome tides of death,*

*He will rescue with the mighty boat of knowledge
this stricken world carried away by the current.*

*The living world that's tormented by thirst will drink
from the lofty stream of dharma flowing from him;*

*A stream that is made cool by mental trance,
a stream whose current is wisdom,
whose banks are steadfast discipline,
whose chakra-vaka ducks are vows.*

*To those who are tormented by suffering,
ensnared by the objects of sense,
roaming through samsara's wild tracks,
This one will proclaim the way to release,
as to travelers who've lost their way.*

*Upon men in this world who are being scorched
by the fire of passion, whose fuel
is the objects of the senses,*

He'll pour relief with the rain of dharma,

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*like a rain cloud pouring down rain,
at the end of the summer heat.
With the irresistible supreme blow
of the true dharma, he will burst open
The door whose bolt is thirst and whose panels
are delusion and torpor,
so that creatures may escape.
Gaining full Awakening, this king of dharma
will release the world from bondage,
A world bound up with the snares of its own delusion,
a world overcome by grief,
a world that has no refuge.*

These are two major representatives of the Brahmanical tradition. The first are wise and learned brahmins, the keepers of the tradition.⁵ The second is Ásita, identified as a “great seer” (*maha*”/*r̥si*: 1.49) and described as a “*brahman*-knower blazing with the splendor of *brahman* and the splendor of his ascetic toil” (1.50). Being a seer, he is identified with the very founders of the Vedic tradition. The term *brahman* here probably refers to the Veda; thus an expert in the Vedas authenticates the dharma the Buddha will discover. From the very heart, therefore, of the Brahmanical tradition the future Buddha receives affirmation and authentication. Significantly, the wise brahmins declare that Siddhártha will become an “Awakened Seer,” placing him squarely within the tradition of Brahmanical holy men. Ásita is said to be “yearning for dharma” (1.49), implicitly stating that he, and therefore the Vedic tradition, did not have the fullness of dharma. That fullness can come only from the Awakened One.

Gods are a third level of authority within the Brahmanical tradition, and at every step of Siddhártha's life gods affirm his uniqueness and facilitate his path toward Awakening. Miracles abound at his birth, and gods bow their heads and hold up a white parasol over him (1.17). Gods and divine serpents are said to be thirsty for his dharma (1.18, 1.24). As Siddhártha leaves home for the wilderness, gods facilitate his departure (5.47, 5.81, 5.86). And just before his Awakening they scold Mara and affirm that Siddhártha has vanquished him and his cohorts (13.56). Brahmanical gods give legitimacy to the Buddha's claim to omniscience and authority to his dharma. We see this also in the visual remains from the Kushána period where the Buddha is often flanked by Brahma and Indra, the creator and the king among the gods. In "Life of the Buddha" itself Siddhártha is equated with Indra and identified with *svayam/bhū*, the Self-existent One, which is a reference to the creator god Brahma.⁶

Even more significant, however, is the implicit undercurrent of the entire text that compares the Buddha to significant Brahmanical figures of the past. Thus, his extraordinary birth is compared to that of other famous kings of the past who had unusual births (1.10). Siddhártha's departure to the forest parallels that of Rama: Shuddhódana's grief is similar to that of Dasha·ratha; the mission of the minister and chaplain to bring Siddhártha back is compared to that of Aurvashéya and Vama·deva, who were commissioned to bring back Rama.⁷ Shuddhódana himself compares his grief to that of Rama's father (8.79, see also 8.81 cited above):

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*I envy the king who was Indra's friend,
the wise son of King Aja;
When his son went to the forest, he went to heaven,
without living a miserable life
and shedding futile tears.*

A theme that runs through the text is that the young and the recent can surpass the old and the ancient. In the very first Canto, the brahmin prognosticators tell Shuddhódana that the young can surpass the old, sons can outdo their fathers, and give many examples from the Brahmanical past to illustrate this truth (1.46). They conclude:

*So, age and lineage are not a yardstick;
anyone anywhere may attain
pre-eminence in the world;
Among kings and seers there are many deeds
not performed by the elders
but accomplished by their sons.*

This is clearly a defensive posture in Ashva·ghosha's "apologia," showing that it is quite legitimate for the "recent" Buddha to challenge and surpass the ancient Brahmanical wisdom.

The Buddha's dharma, then, is not in opposition to the Brahmanical tradition; it is not a "heterodox" religion. Ashva·ghosha presents it as representing the highest aspirations of that tradition, as the fulfillment of its deepest yearnings, as its crowning achievement.

Refutation of Brahmanical Arguments

Even though Ashva·ghosha sought to present Buddhism as an integral part of Brahmanism, the reality was that there was an ongoing debate between the two traditions. This is evident in the literary traditions,⁸ but the opposition probably was manifested also within the political, social, and economic reality as well. But “Life of the Buddha” is concerned principally with the intellectual challenges to the Buddhist dharma, especially to the Buddhist view of the ascetic life as the highest religious aspiration and the only mode of life that can lead a person to final liberation from the phenomenal life of suffering.

On the one hand, Ashva·ghosha presents Brahmanical objections to the Buddhist dharma and the Buddhist responses to them in several speeches and dialogues by various interlocutors. On the other hand, Ashva·ghosha addresses issues of religious modes of life and philosophies and technologies of liberation within Brahmanism to demonstrate their inadequacy with regard to final liberation. I will deal with these two aspects of his argument separately.

The first of these interlocutors is a young man named Udáyin, the son of the king’s chaplain, who will also present Brahmanical arguments against the Buddha’s decision to renounce. Udáyin is a young urbane gentleman, an educated brahmin and friend of Prince Siddhártha. His focus is on *kāma*, the sensual pleasures that a young person of wealth and power should indulge in. This accords with the efforts of Shuddhódana to surround his son with pleasure and comforts so that Ásita’s prediction that he will repair to the forest would not come true. In Canto 4 we see Prince

Siddhártha, who had already seen the signs that pointed to the suffering and impermanent nature of life, surrounded by royal courtesans in a lovely royal park. Their job was to entertain the prince and draw him into a life of sensual indulgence. What is significant in Udáyin's comments for the Brahmanical argument, however, is that engaging in pleasures during youth is presented as a duty within the "triple set" (*tri/varga*), the three goals that a human being should pursue; *kāma* is the first of these to be followed in one's youth. Udáyin presents examples of ancient sages and seers who engaged in sex; there really is nothing wrong with it! Shuddhódana himself takes up this theme in his objection to a young man taking to the ascetic life; it can be dangerous, because a young man is unable to control his senses (5.30–31):

*Turn back, my son, from this resolution,
for it's not the time for you
to give yourself to dharma;
For, when you're young and your mind is fickle,
there're many dangers, they say,
in the practice of dharma.
As objects of sense tend to excite his senses,
as he can't be firm facing the hardships of vows,
A young man's mind turns away from the wilderness,
above all as he is not used to solitude.*

This is a fine segue to the next argument: the ascetic life is best undertaken when someone is old. This is in keeping with the classical formulation of the *āśrama* system which sees the four as stages of life through which a man passes as

he grows old (OLIVELLE 1993). Renunciation of the world and the pursuit of liberation are reserved for old age. Once again Shuddhódana articulates this position well (5.32–33):

*But for me it is the time for dharma,
after conferring on you sovereignty,
you who possess the marks of sovereignty
O lover of dharma;
But if you leave your father by violating
the right order, you whose courage is firm,
your dharma will turn into adharma.
So, give up this resolution of yours,
give yourself for now to household dharma;
For, when one goes to the ascetic grove
after he has enjoyed the joys of youth,
it's truly a wonderful sight!*

The Chaplain too, as he conveys to the prince his father's arguments, articulates the Brahmanical position that the *āśramas* should be undertaken in the proper order; violating that order, as Siddhártha has done, is against dharma. So, the Buddha's wish to follow the dharma is itself an *a/dharma*—a refrain that we hear frequently in the Brahmanical objections (9.14):

*I know that you have resolved to follow dharma,
and, I realize, this will be your future goal;
but I am burnt up by this fire, the fire of grief,
for you have gone to the forest at the wrong time.*

The king's counselor also reiterates this point. Their objection is not to Siddhártha taking to renunciation but to

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the untimely nature of his decision. Indeed, the counselor is patronizing when he says that Siddhártha may have made this foolish decision because he was unfamiliar with the duties inherent in the “triple set” (9.53–54):

*It is not that this decision of yours
to practice dharma is not right,
just that this is not the right time;
For, to condemn your old father to grief
is surely not your dharma,
you who delight in dharma.
Perhaps your mind is not too sharp,
or not conversant with
dharma, wealth, and pleasure;
That you leave to win an unseen result,
disdaining the object before your eyes.*

The importance of following the “triple set” is also the focus of King Shrenya’s argument that Siddhártha should return home and become king. The three goals should be followed sequentially and in the proper order; violation of that order invites ruin (10.28–30):

*Choose, therefore, any one of these options,
devote yourself as prescribed
to dharma, wealth, and pleasure;
For by inverting here the triple set
through passion one goes to ruin
here and in the hereafter.
For when pleasure impairs wealth and dharma,
when wealth suppresses dharma and pleasure,
Or when dharma wipes out pleasure and wealth,*

*one should abandon it, if one wishes
to attain the goal in its entirety.
By pursuing, therefore, the triple set,
make this lovely body of yours bear fruit;
For when a man gains in their entirety
dharma, wealth, and pleasure, they say
he has achieved the purpose of
human life in its entirety.*

The triple set is also connected explicitly with the pursuit of asceticism in old age (10.34):

*Surely, when you are old you can practice dharma,
old age lacks capacity to enjoy pleasures;
And, therefore, they assign pleasure for youth,
wealth for the middle-aged,
and dharma for the old.*

Yasho-dhara's lament (8.32, 8.61) at her husband abandoning her with an infant child is heart-rending; and that is its intent. But there are elements of her forceful tirade that represent a Brahmanical argument. Siddhártha's wife is his partner in dharma (*saha/dharma/cāriṇī*); and this makes perfect sense if we see the sacrificial and ritual regimen of Brahmanism as the central focus of dharma. Only a married man accompanied by his wife can perform the major ritual acts of the Brahmanical religion. Yasho-dhara presents her case forcefully. Siddhártha's practice of dharma, that is, his ascetic practices, will not provide him with dharma, that is, spiritual merit (8.61):

*If it is his wish to practice dharma,
abandoning me without protector,
forsaking me, his partner in dharma;
From where can he obtain dharma
when he desires ascetic toil
without his partner in dharma?*

She accuses him of being selfish in not permitting her to share in his dharma, and she presents the examples of former kings who entered the forest accompanied by their wives⁹ (8.62–63):

*Perhaps he has not heard of former kings,
his forefathers such as Maha-sudársha,
who repaired to the forest with their wives;
For that's the reason why he wants
to practice dharma without me.*

*Perhaps he does not see that in sacrifices
both husband and wife are consecrated
and are sanctified by the Vedic rites,
that the two enjoy the fruits of these rites,
equally even in the afterlife;
That's the reason why he acts selfishly
with respect to dharma concerning me.*

Finally, there is the argument that the pursuit of liberation is not confined to world-renouncing ascetics; history tells us that even householders have attained liberation. The argument here is one we hear frequently in the epics: if knowledge is the cause of liberation, then the emblems of the ascetic life are useless. One can obtain that knowledge in any station of life. Thus the “Bhagavad Gita” (5.3) calls a

householder who engages in ritual activities with inner detachment a *nitya/samnyāsī*, someone who is a continuous renouncer. The chaplain reports this argument of Shuddhó-dana (9.18–21):

*And this dharma is achieved not just in forests;
ascetics do achieve it even in cities;
in this regard the means are effort and intent;
forest and emblems are the marks of a coward.
Kings, even while remaining householders
cradled in the lap of royal fortune
crowns upon their heads
pearl strings on shoulders
arms bound with bracelets
have won the dharma of release—
Bali and Vajra·bahu,
the younger brothers of Dhruva,
Vaibhrája, Ashádha, and Anti·deva,
Jánaka, likewise, the king of Vidéha,
Druma of Shalva and the Sénajit kings—
Know that these householder kings were well trained
in dharma rules leading to highest bliss;
therefore, you should enjoy both together,
lordship over mind and royal fortune.*

In refuting one by one these arguments, viewed by Sidhártha as specious, he sets out the central thesis of the Buddhist dharma: life is suffering, life is impermanent, death looms large, one cannot wait until old age to achieve release. The message is one of anguish, anxiety, and urgency. This again is not something completely new; a very similar message is presented by a son arguing on the same topic

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with his father in a fine “Maha·bhárata” passage (12.169). Siddhártha articulates this position to Udáyin (4.97–8):

*O how steady and strong your mind must be
that you see substance in fleeting pleasures,
That, seeing these creatures on the path of death,
you are attached to sensual pleasures
in the midst of the most frightful dangers.
I, however, am timid, much perturbed,
as I think of the dangers
of old age, sickness, and death;
I find no peace or content, much less joy,
seeing the world with fire as if ablaze.*

He tells his father that he will remain at home if Shudhódana can be a surety with regard to four things, if he can guarantee these four outcomes (5.34–35):

*If you will become a surety for me
in four things, O King,
I will not go to the ascetic grove.
My life shall never be subject to death,
disease shall not steal this good health of mine,
Old age shall never overtake my youth,
no mishap shall rob this fortune of mine.*

He rejects the examples from history that Udáyin cites. They have no authority with regard to dharma. These men cannot be eminent or exemplary when their behavior is so reprehensible (4.90–91):

*What you say about those eminent men,
 that they were also given to pleasures;
 It should indeed cause us all anxiety,
 that these men also have succumbed to death!
 No true eminence exists in my view,
 where death exists as a general trait,
 Where attachment to sense objects persists,
 or where self-possession is not attained.*

Clearly, waiting for old age to pursue liberation is not an option. The *āśrama* system may be fine social organization, but it fails to answer the anxieties buried in the hearts of those seeking to break out of the bondage of old age, sickness, and death. There is no wrong time to pursue bliss (9.37–38):

*From the time a man comes out of the womb
 death is set to slay him at every stage;
 So how could His Lordship, in his love for his son,
 say that I went to the forest at the wrong time?
 There is a wrong time to enjoy pleasures,
 a time is ordained also for obtaining wealth;
 Time tears up this world all the time;
 but there is no appointed time
 for what produces final bliss.*

He explicitly rejects the dharma based on following the “triple set,” calling it an evil and unable to satisfy the ultimate yearning of the human heart (11.58):

*As to what you said to me that the triple set
 when followed in its entirety
 is for humans the highest good;*

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*My view on this is that it's truly an evil,
for the triple set is fleeting
and fails to satisfy.*

Finally, Siddhártha rejects out of hand the very possibility of attaining liberation while remaining a king and a householder. The office of the king is filled with dangers to the spiritual life (9.40–41):

*How can it be right for a wise man to accept
kingship that is delusion's dwelling place,
Where anxiety, pride, and fatigue lurk, and damage
to dharma by mistreating other men?
For a kingdom is charming yet full of dangers,
like a golden castle that is on fire,
like exquisite food that's mixed with poison,
like a lotus pond filled with crocodiles.*

And he dismisses the scriptures and traditions that record household kings who attained liberation (9.48–50):

*As for the scripture that householder kings
have attained release,
that cannot be!
The dharma of release, where calm prevails,
And the dharma of kings, where force prevails—
how far apart are they!
If a king delights in calm, his realm falls apart,
if his mind is on his realm, his calm is destroyed;
For calmness and fierceness are incompatible,
like the union of fire and water, heat and cold.
So, certainly, either those kings
gave up their realms and obtained calm,*

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*Or remaining within the realm, they projected
release to a non-final state,
because their senses were controlled.*

Besides rejecting the Brahmanical arguments against renunciation and the Buddhist dharma, Ashva·ghosha takes up the issue of Brahmanical techniques and philosophies pertaining to liberation. Siddhártha as a brand new ascetic visits (Canto 6) a Brahmanical hermitage with ascetics engaged in a variety of austere practices (*tapas*). The ascetics explain the kinds of vows they undertake, the pain they endure. But Siddhártha observes that all their pain and suffering only lead to temporary states of happiness; they work so much for so little (7.20–21):

*Pain is basic to the many types of ascetic toil,
while heaven is the highest reward of ascetic toil;
And yet, all the worlds are subject to change;
such toil in hermitages
only to gain so little!
They forsake their dear kin and objects of sense
and for the sake of heaven practice restraint;
Yet parted from that, they are destined to go
only to states of bondage even more dire.*

He points out the contradiction in what they are doing, for if bodily pain is dharma, then bodily bliss should be *a/dharma*; yet they seek bliss by means of pain (7.26):

*But, if dharma here consists of bodily pain,
then bodily bliss should be adharma;*

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*So when by dharma one attains bliss hereafter,
dharma here bears the fruit of adharma!*

When the ascetics implore him to remain with them, Siddhártha states forthrightly that his goal is very different from the lower ones they have set for themselves (7.48):

*But your dharma aims at attaining heaven;
and my desire is to be free from rebirth.
So I have no wish to live in this forest,
for the dharma of cessation is opposed
to the dharma of continued existence.*

Once again Ashva·ghosha produces an authoritative Brahmanical voice to put the stamp of Brahmanical approval on the path Siddhártha has taken. This brahmin is made authoritative by his bodily appearance, just like the infant Siddhártha (7.51–52):

*But a certain tall brahmin among them,
used to lying on ash, wearing a topknot,
with reddish eyes, wearing a bark garment,
with a thin long nose and a water pot,
made this oration:*

*Wise one, your resolve is truly magnificent,
in that, still young, you have seen the peril of birth;
For, having examined well heaven and release,
one who sets his mind on release,
he alone does truly exist!*

The philosophical side of Brahmanism is represented by Aráda, who teaches a form of Sankhya doctrine. Clearly at this time it was the major philosophy within the broad

Brahmanical tradition represented by the “Maha-bhárata” and especially the “Bhagavad Gita.” Siddhártha is again dismissive of this knowledge that, according to him, leads only half way; it does not produce final bliss and liberation. The main problem for him is the presence of a permanent soul within the Sankhya philosophy (12.69–71):

*I have listened to this subtle knowledge
 that grows progressively more and more pure;
 But since the field-knower is not forsaken,
 I think it is short of the absolute.
 For, although the knower of the field is freed
 from Primal nature and Transformations,
 Yet I think it still has the quality
 of giving birth and serving as a seed.
 For, though the soul, being wholly pure,
 you consider to be released;
 Yet, because the causal roots are present,
 it will once again become unreleased.*

Dharma as Site of Contention

HILTEBEITEL (2006: 235) remarks that “It is a surprising point to have to make that Ashva-ghosha would be centrally concerned with dharma, but others seem to have missed it.” By “others” he means modern scholars of Ashva-ghosha. It is, indeed, surprising that even JOHNSTON, whose edition and translation of “Life of the Buddha” and his long and detailed introduction to it remain the single most important contribution to Ashva-ghosha studies up to this day, does not deal with this topic at all. Reading “Life of the

Buddha” closely, one cannot fail to notice not only the frequency with which he used the term dharma (130 times in the first thirteen Cantos) but also how he plays with the diverse meanings the term had within the religious discourses of his day. From the recent studies of dharma in the epics and the legal tradition (OLIVELLE 2004), it is very clear that this term had become the central site of contention among the various religious movements. The question was: Whose dharma is the best, the fullest, and the most authentic?

The period “Between the Empires,” the Maurya and the Gupta, roughly the last four centuries BCE and the first four CE, was a time of great intellectual ferment (OLIVELLE 2006). The picture painted in general introductions to Indian religions of an unchanging India, of an immutable perennial philosophy, is simply an illusion. What BIMAL MATILAL has said of the Indian intellectual tradition in general applies in spades to this period: “The tradition was self-conscious. It has been interpreting and re-interpreting itself over the ages. It is hardly a new phenomenon. The myth is tied up with the Indologist’s romantic search for a classical, pure form of Hinduism (or Buddhism as the case may be), and is little better than a dream” (GANERI 2002: 40). It was not sufficient for the inquiring minds of the period that something should be considered authoritative simply because it is found in the scriptures of one or another tradition, or even in the Vedas. Ashva-ghosha compares the back-and-forth movement of a demonic woman to the mind of a fickle man moving from one scripture to another (13.49). There were various scriptures competing for attention. Siddhártha rejects out of hand the scriptures,

here probably the Vedas, on which the Brahmanical arguments against renunciation are based (4.83), calling them “unfounded” (9.76). Shuddhódana’s advisors are aware that there is a deep controversy between the various rules of the Vedic scriptures and the views of Siddhártha; they present their mission to bring him back as a battle between these two sides (8.85):

*Let a battle then be waged here on many fronts
between your son and the diverse rules of scripture.*

It is within this context of inquiry and debate that we must see the controversies surrounding dharma. Ashvaghosha presents the arguments from the Buddhist and the Brahmanical sides as a controversy centered on the correct definition of dharma. It is not so much that some definitions of dharma are considered false. Ashvaghosha presents the array of meanings in which his interlocutors used the term, all of them legitimate at some level. What he wants to emphasize, however, is that no dharma can prevent the pursuit of the highest dharma, the dharma that Siddhártha pursues, the dharma that he preaches once he has become the Buddha. Lower level conceptions of dharma cannot be obstacles on the path to the highest dharma, the “true dharma” of Buddhism called *sad/dharma*.¹⁰

At the highest level, then, dharma (Dhṛ) ¹¹ is the truth and the way that was the content of the Buddha’s Awakening. Thus, the insight into the law of dependent origination he obtained at his Awakening is described as “the excellent dharma he had seen,” which is his best companion (14.99).¹² The reference is to Dhṛ when divine serpents

are said to be “thirsty for dharma” (1.19), divine beings are said to be “eager for dharma” (1.24), and Ásita is said to be “yearning for dharma” (1.49). Ásita also refers to Dhī when he calls the Buddha “this king of dharma” (1.75) and laments that he will not live to hear this “absolute dharma” (1.76). This is the “lofty stream of dharma” (1.71) that the world longs to drink from, the “rain of dharma” (1.73) that will relieve the world burning with the fire of passion.

Closely linked to Dhī is the use of dharma (Dh₂) with reference to leaving home and family and devoting oneself completely to the pursuit of liberation within an ascetic mode of life. Thus at 3.24 when it is said that Siddhártha “will give up kingship and follow the dharma,” or when at 10.33 he is asked to wait until he is old to “practice dharma,” or when at 5.30 he is told that it is not the right time to “follow dharma,” it is clear that the reference is to the ascetic way of life, even though what exact form it would take is left unclear. It appears that for Ashva-ghosha dharma as such, that is, when the term is used without additional qualifications, has the meaning of Dh₂. Thus at least one meaning of dharma used in the “triple set” appears to be identical with Dh₂. I think this meaning is broad enough to cover the hermits living in forest hermitages, as also wandering mendicants. Thus Siddhártha tells the hermits that he does not know “this method of dharma” (7.12), and that he is “still a novice in dharma” (7.46).

A different meaning is evident in the use of dharma (Dh₃) to indicate the proper behavior pattern and the proper sequence in which various duties should be undertaken. This is the more traditional meaning of dharma

found in the Brahmanical *dharma/sāstras*. The opposite of Dh₃ dharma is *a/dharma*, both the violation of that dharma and the sin and demerit one acquires as a result. Thus, Shuddhódana admonishes his son that if he pursues dharma in violation of the proper order, he will be committing an *a/dharma*: “if you leave your father violating the proper order ... your dharma will turn into *a/dharma*” (5.32). At 9.14 the Chaplain tells the prince to give up Dh₂ dharma “for the sake of dharma itself.” Clearly, there is a battle being waged within the very bosom of dharma. Ashva-ghosha presents the conflicts between the various forms of dharma, as when following Dh₂ dharma is a violation of Dh₃ dharma. He rejects, however, the Brahmanical resolution proposed: follow the various dharmas during different periods of life, which is the solution offered also by the *āśrama* system in the classical formulation of Manu. The power of the call of Dh₁ and Dh₂ dharma eliminates the claims of any other form of dharma. This is a point made also in the ascetical texts of the Brahmanical tradition itself, as when the *Jābālopaniṣad* (iv) says that a person may renounce “on the very day that he becomes detached” regardless of whether he has fulfilled any other obligation or not. Siddhártha himself gives a similar response to his groom Chanda (6.21): “no time is improper for pursuing dharma (Dh₂), when life is so insecure.”

Often dharma is qualified as belonging to or within the domain of a particular category of people or a particular goal toward which it is directed. Although the kinds of dharma comprehended within this usage are many, I will call this usage Dh₄, because here dharma is explicitly con-

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fined to a specific sphere.¹³ Thus, Ashva-ghosha speaks of *mokṣa/dharma* (dharma of liberation; 9.19, 9.48), *nivṛtti/dharma* (dharma of cessation; 7.48), *rāja/dharma* (dharma of kings; 9.48), and *grhasthā/dharma* (householder's dharma; 5.33).

Within Dh₄ dharma, however, the householder's dharma (which I will call Dh₅ and which includes a substantial segment of the royal dharma) is often singled out in opposition to the Dh₂ dharma. The opposition between Dh₂ and Dh₅ is at the heart of the debates within "Life of the Buddha." In an interesting sleight of hand, Shrenya tells Siddhártha that if he wants to practice dharma then he should go ahead and perform sacrifices (10.39), which will take him to the zenith of heaven. Thus, dharma is sacrifice, as also the other attendant duties of a Brahmanical householder. It is in this sense that Yasho-dhara calls herself Siddhártha's *saha/dharma/cāriṇī*, "companion in the performance of dharma" (8.61). She then challenges his desire to practice dharma (Dh₂) without his partner in dharma (Dh₅), concluding that in this way he will not acquire dharma, for he is acting selfishly in his quest (8.63). The clearest oppositon of these two kinds of dharma is given at 7.48 where Siddhártha opposes the dharma of cessation (*nivṛtti/dharma*) to the dharma of continued worldly existence (*pravṛtti/dharma*).

While defining dharma per se as Dh₅, the Brahmanical interlocutors can divide Dh₂ into two separate aspects: the ascetic lifestyle and the goal of liberation. These two aspects are intermingled within the compound *mokṣa/dharma*. Thus Siddhártha is told that "this dharma (Dh₂ as lib-

eration) is achieved not only in the forest” (9.18); examples of householder kings who became liberated are given as proof (9.19).

It is also in this context of redefining what dharma may mean that we come across another universal and ethical meaning of dharma (Dh6) as “compassion for all creatures” (9.17). It appears that it is this superior dharma (Dh6) that Shuddhódana invokes in asking his son to abandon his resolve to follow dharma (Dh2) “for the sake of dharma (Dh6) itself” (9.15) asking him to “show kindness to this unlucky father of yours, for dharma is compassion for all creatures” (9.17).

“Life of the Buddha,” then, presents what Shuddhódana’s wise counselor calls a “battle waged on many fronts” between Siddhártha, the Buddha-to-be, and the diverse rules of Vedic scriptures. The most prominent front of this battle centers on the interpretation of dharma. The triumph of the Buddha’s dharma, called appropriately *sad/dharma* (the true dharma or the real dharma, 1.74), over the other interpretations is the ultimate “apologia” for Buddhism presented by Ashva-ghosha. It is significant that Ashva-ghosha’s narrative of the life of the Buddha ends not with his death but with the erection of eighty thousand *stūpas* enshrining the Buddha’s relics by the Emperor Ashóka. The conversion and religious activities of Ashóka signal the final triumph of the Buddha’s doctrine in that “battle waged on many fronts.” The inclusion of Ashóka in Ashva-ghosha’s narrative also indicates the importance of the Emperor in the historical imagination of early Buddhism.

Note on the Text and Translation

No student or translator of the *Buddhacarita* can ignore the monumental work of E.H. JOHNSTON; his work stands as the solid foundation on which contemporary scholars build. One may then question the need for a new translation of this text. The reason is given by JOHNSTON himself, when he confesses: "My translation is a pedestrian affair, designed to be read with the text and to explain its meaning, not to transmute [transmit?] its spirit and literary quality into an alien tongue" (JOHNSTON 1984: iii). I have attempted to convey the literary spirit of the text in this new translation within the limits of my ability, while maintaining accuracy.

One departure from my other translations of Sanskrit texts concerns the pivotal concept of dharma. In my other translations I have regularly translated all Sanskrit terms, including dharma. In Ashva·ghosha's vocabulary and argument, however, dharma is used deliberately with so many meanings and nuances that it would have been futile to capture these varying significations in the translation; English does not have a sufficiently rich vocabulary for this purpose. Therefore, I have kept the words dharma and its opposite *a/dharma* in the translation, inviting thereby the reader to see the different contexts and meanings of this central term.

The Sanskrit text of the *Buddhacarita* has been preserved, unfortunately, in only a single incomplete manuscript. It contains the first thirteen cantos and part of the fourteenth canto of the text. This manuscript was the basis for all the editions of the *Buddhacarita*, including the one JOHNSTON used for his translation. The entire text of the *Buddhacarita*

exists in both Chinese and Tibetan translations. JOHNSTON has made use of these to critically edit the Sanskrit text. In the first canto also, the first seven verses, as well as verses 25–40, are missing in the Sanskrit manuscript. A few of these verses have been reconstructed into Sanskrit by JOHNSTON on the basis of the Chinese and Tibetan translation; these I have given within square brackets. My rendering of these verses missing in the Sanskrit manuscript, as well as the summaries of the last cantos, are based on JOHNSTON's translations from the Chinese and Tibetan.

In his argument for the superiority of the Buddhist dharma, Ashva-ghosha alludes to numerous Brahmanical myths, legends, and stories. Without at least a basic familiarity with this mythological background, it is difficult to follow his argument. I have tried to give as much of this background as possible in the notes to the translation, within the confines imposed by the format of this series. Ashva-ghosha also mentions numerous names of seers, holy persons, gods, and the fauna and flora of India. These are listed in the Glossary of Names.

Notes

- 1 The connection between old age and asceticism is found in a variety of literature (see OLIVELLE 1993: 112–22). Space does not permit me to provide detailed evidence; however, it is Manu who first uses the theology of debts (*r̥na*) to provide theological grounding to this view. This theology was already used by Bau-dháyana as an argument against the *āśrama* system as a whole and against celibate asceticism (OLIVELLE 1993: 86–91).
- 2 For a detailed discussion of this, see JOHNSTON (1984: lxxix–xcviii).

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- 3 When I refer to “Brahmanical challenges” or “Brahmanical arguments” I do not mean that they are actually articulated by brahmins within the *Buddhacarita*. Many of these arguments are made by individuals who are not brahmins—Kings Shuddhódana and Shrénya, Yasho-dhara, and Chanda—but the arguments present the Brahmanical party line.
- 4 See 12.21, 12.29, 12.35, 12.63. At 12.82 we have simply *smṛtabh*.
- 5 Note also that his first converts too are brahmins (Canto 16). Especially noteworthy is the Buddha’s victory over Áruvila Káshyapa and his disciples, and the conversion of Sankhya ascetics (Canto 17), including Maudgalyáyana and his other chief disciples, as well as the major Sankhya teachers Pañcha-shikha and Ásuri (Canto 21) and Subhádra, the last of his converts (Canto 26).
- 6 See also Canto 17 where gods headed by Brahma are said to have lived in Venu-vana in the company of the Buddha and his disciples.
- 7 As HILTEBEITEL (2006: 249) notes, in four of the thirteen conversations of the Buddha relating to dharma Ashva-ghosha relates the prince’s departure directly to the *Rāmāyana*.
- 8 See my earlier comments on the Sanskrit epics and Manu, which are seen increasingly as apologetical works directed primarily at Buddhism.
- 9 This argument parallels the one made by Madri and Kunti in the *Mahābhārata* (MBh, Critical Edition (CE) 1.110.26) in their effort to accompany their common husband, Pandu, into the forest: “Surely there are other *āśramas*, O bull of the Bháratas, that you can pursue together with us, your wives according to dharma.” This *āśrama* is, of course, the third one of the forest hermit.
- 10 The term *sad/dharma* occurs five times in the *Buddhacarita*: 1.49, 1.74, 6.31, 13.1, 13.31.
- 11 I will use Dh₁, Dh₂ etc. to indicate the different meanings of dharma within the *Buddhacarita* for heuristic purposes, even

INTRODUCTION

though I do not intend within the compass of this introduction to deal exhaustively with these meanings.

- 12 This section is found only in the Chinese and Tiberan translations.
- 13 This is the usage we find in the Brahmanical *dharma/sāstras* whey they speak of *jāti/dharma* (dharma of castes), *desa/dharma* (dharma of regions), *rāja/dharma* (dharma of kings), and the like.

Abbreviations

MBh CE = *Mahābhārata* Pune critical edition

MBh CSL = *Mahābhārata* Clay Sanskrit Library edition

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LIFE OF THE BUDDHA



CANTO I
THE BIRTH OF THE LORD

1.1

[**A**IKŚVĀKA IKŚVĀKU|sama|prabhāvah
 Śākyeṣv aśākyeṣu viśuddha|vṛttah
priyah śarac|candra iva prajābhyaḥ
 Śuddhodano nāma babbūva rājā.]

[tasy' Īndra|kalpasya babbūva patnī

Padm" ēva lakṣmīḥ pṛthiv" īva dhīrā
Māy" ēti nāmn" ân|upam" ēva Māyā.]

[-----

tataś ca vidy" ēva samādhī|yuktā
garbam dadhe pāpa|vivarjitā sā.]

[-----

na tan|nimittam samavāpa tāpam.]

1.5

[sā tasya deva|pratimasya devī
garbheṇa vamśa|śriyam udvahantī

------.]

[sā Lumbinīm nāma van'|ânta|bhūmīm
citra|drumām Caitrarath'|âbhirāmām

------.]

IN IKSHVÁKU'S LINE, equal to Ikshváku in might,
among the invincible Shakyas, was born a king,
loved by his people like the autumn moon,
pure in conduct, Shuddhódana by name.

That equal of Indra had a wife like Shachi herself;
her splendor paralleled his might;
she was as pretty as Padmá, as steadfast as the Earth,
Maya by name, like the peerless Maya herself.

That ruler of men, sporting with his queen,
enjoyed, as it were, Váishravana's sovereign might;
free from sin, then, she produced the fruit
of her womb,
as knowledge does, when united with trance.

Before she conceived she saw in a dream
a white elephant king
entering her body, yet she did not
thereby feel any pain.

Maya, then, the queen of that god-like king,
her womb bearing the glory of his line,
by her purity freed from delusion,
sorrow and fatigue, set her mind
on visiting that faultless grove.

Seeking a lonely grove suited for trance,
she asked the king to go to Lúmbini,
and to stay in that grove
with trees of every kind,
as lovely as the Cháitraratha grove.

[āry'|āśayām̄ tām̄ - - - - -
 vijñāya kautūhalā|harsa|pūrṇah
 śivāt purād bhūmi|patir jagāma
 tat|prītaye n' āpi vihāra|hetoh.]

tasmin vane śīmati rāja|patnī
 prasūti|kālam̄ samavekṣamāṇā
 śayyām̄ vitān'|ōpahitām̄ prapede
 nārī|sahasrair abhinandyamāṇā.

tataḥ prasannaś ca babhūva Puṣyas
 tasyāś ca devyā vrata|saṃskṛtāyāḥ
 pārśvāt suto loka|hitāya jajñe
 nir|vedanam̄ c' āiva nir|āmayam̄ ca.

1.10 ūror yath" Āurvasya Pṛthoś ca hastān
 Māndhātūr Indra|pratimasya mūrdhnah
 Kakṣīvatas c' āiva bhuj'|āṁsa|deśat
 tathā|vidham̄ tasya babhūva janma.

krameṇa garbhād abhiniḥṣṭaḥ san
 babhau cyutaḥ khād iva yony|aljātaḥ
 kalpeṣv anjekesu ca bhāvit'|ātmā
 yaḥ saṃprajānan suṣuve na mūḍhaḥ.

dīptyā ca dhairyena ca yo rarāja
 bālo ravir bhūmim iv' āvatīrṇah
 tath" ātidīpto 'pi nirikṣyamāṇo
 jahāra cakṣūm̄si yathā śaś|āṅkah.

Noting that her intention was noble,
because she was endowed with piety,
the king, filled with both wonder and delight,
departed from that auspicious city
to please her and not as a pleasure trip.

In that lovely grove, knowing that the time
for delivery was at hand, the queen went
to a bed covered with a canopy,
to the welcome words of thousands of maids.

Then, as Pushya turned propitious, a son was born
from the side of the queen consecrated by rites,
without pain and without ill,
for the welfare of the world.

As Aurva from the thigh,
as Prithu from the hand,
as Mandhátri from the head,
he who was Indra's peer,
as Kakshívat from the armpit,
so was this birth.*

1.10

When in due course he emerged from the womb,
but did not emerge through the birth canal,
he gleamed as if he'd fallen from the sky;
through untold eons he had nurtured his self,
so he was born aware, not oblivious.

With luster and fortitude he did gleam,
as if the young sun had come down to earth;
though dazzlingly bright, he captured the eyes
of those who gazed on him, just like the moon.*

sa hi svagātra|prabhay” ôjjvalantyā
 dīpa|prabhām bhāskaravan mumoṣa
 mah”|ârha|jāmbūnada|cāru|varṇo
 vidyotayām āsa diśaś ca sarvāḥ.

an|ākulāny ubja|samudgatāni
 niśpeśavad vyāyata|vikramāṇi
 tath” āiva dhīrāṇi padāni sapta
 sapta’|ṛṣi|tārā|sa|dṛśo jagāma.

1.15 «bodhāya jāto ’smi, jagadd|hīt’|ârtham
 antyā bhav’|ôtpattir iyam mam’ ēti»
 catur|diśam simhal|gatir vilokya
 vāṇīm ca bhavy’|ârtha|karīm uvāca.

khāt prasrute candra|marīci|śubhre
 dve vāri|dhāre śisir’|ôṣṇa|vīrye
 śarīra|saṃsparśa|sukh’|ântarāya
 nipetatur mūrdhani tasya saumye.

śrīmad|vitāne kanak’|ôjjval’|âṅge
 vaidūrya|pāde śayane śayānam
 yad|gauravāt kāñcana|padma|hastā
 yakṣ’|âdhipāḥ saṃparivārya tasthuḥ.

[adr̄śya|bhāvā]ś ca div’|âukasah khe
 yasya prabhāvāt praṇataih śirobhiḥ
 âdhārayan pāṇḍaram ātapa|tram
 bodhāya jepuh param’|āśiṣaś ca.

With the dazzling splendor of his body,
he robbed the light of lamps, just like the sun;
with the charming color of costliest gold,
he lit up all the quarters of the sky.

He looked like the stars of the seven seers,*
as he took seven steps that were steady,
lifted up evenly and straight,
stretched out wide and firmly set down.

“For Awakening I am born,
for the welfare of the world;
This indeed is the last coming
into existence for me!”

1.15

Looking at the four quarters with a lion’s mien,
he uttered these words, foretelling what was to come.

From the sky two streams of water came down,
limpid like the rays of the sun and moon,*
they fell, one warm and one cold, on his lovely head,
to give refreshment to his body by their touch.

He slept in a bed with a splendid canopy,
with feet of beryl, with its sides glistening with gold;
yaksha chiefs stood there surrounding him reverently,
golden lotuses in their hands.

Heavenly beings, remaining invisible,
their heads bowed because of his majesty,
held a white parasol in the sky over him,
and gave their best blessings for his Awakening.

mah”|ôragā dharma|viśeṣa|tarṣād
 buddheṣv atīteṣu kṛt’|ādhikārāḥ
 yam avyajan bhakti|viśiṣṭa|netrā
 mandāra|puṣpaiḥ samavākiramś ca.

1.20 Tathāgar’|ôtpāda|guṇena tuṣṭāḥ
 śuddh’|ādhivāsāś ca viśuddha|sattvāḥ
 devā nanandur vigate ’pi rāge
 magnasya duḥkhe jagato hitāya.

yasya prasūtau giri|rāja|kīlā
 vāt’|āhatā naur iva bhūś cacāla
 sa|candanā c’ ôtpala|padma|garbhā
 papāta vr̄ṣṭir gaganād an|abhrāt.

vātā vavuh sparśa|sukhā mano|jñā
 divyāni vāsāṁsy avapātayantah
 sūryaḥ sa ev’ ābhyaadhikām cakāśe
 jajvāla saumy’|ārcir an|īrito ’gnih.

prāg|uttare c’ āvasatha|pradeśe
 kūpaḥ svayam prādur|abhūt sit’|āmbuḥ
 antah|purāṇy āgata|vismayāni
 yasmin kriyās tīrtha iva pracakruḥ.

dharma’|ārthibhir bhūta|gaṇaiś ca divyais
 tad|darśan’|ārtham vanam āpupūre
 kautūhalen’ āiva ca pāda|pebhyaḥ
 puṣpāṇy a|kale ’pi [nipātitāni.]

Thirsty for the excellent dharma, mighty serpents,
who for Buddhas past

had performed this same function,
fanned him, their eyes exuding devotion,
and sprinkled him with *mandára* blossoms.

Gladdened by the eminence of Tathágata's birth,*
the gods of the pure realm, their spirits purified,*
rejoiced, even though in them the passions were stilled,
for the welfare of the world plunged in suffering.

1.20

At his birth the earth,
pegged down by the mountain king,*
shook like a ship tossed around by the wind;
and from a cloudless sky fell a shower
filled with lotuses blue and red,
and with the scent of sandalwood.

Charming breezes blew, pleasing to the touch,
bringing down showers of garments divine;
the very same sun gleamed ever more bright,
fire blazed without flicker with graceful flames.

In the north-east corner of the dwelling
a well with cool water sprang on its own;
ladies of the seraglio, utterly amazed,
performed the rituals there, as at a sacred ford.

Eager for dharma, throngs of divine beings
filled that grove to obtain his sight;
though out of season, in their zeal,
they threw down flowers from the trees.

LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

1.25 [-----

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1.30 [-----

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At that time vicious animals lived together
without injuring each other;
and those diseases common among men,
they too were cured without any effort.

1.25

The birds and deer muffled their cries,
with calm waters the rivers flowed,
the quarters became clear, cloudless sparkled the sky,
and the drums of the gods resounded in the air.*

When the Teacher was born for the release of all,
total peace enveloped the entire world,
as if a lord had come in a time of turmoil;
only Kama, the god of love, did not rejoice.

When he saw the wondrous birth of his son,
the king, although steadfast, was much perturbed;
and from his love two streams of tears surged forth,
rising from apprehension and delight.

The queen was overcome with fear and joy,
like a mixed stream of water, hot and cold;
both because her son's power was other than human,
and because of a mother's natural weakness.

The pious old women failed to comprehend,
seeing only reasons for alarm;
cleansing themselves and doing rites for good luck,
they petitioned the gods for good fortune.

1.30

LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

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1.35 [-----

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Brahmins famed for learning, eloquence, and conduct,
heard about these omens and they examined them;
their faces beaming with wonder and elation,
they said this to the king gripped by both fear and joy:

“On earth for their peace men desire
no distinction beyond a son;
this lamp of yours is the lamp of your clan,
so rejoice and prepare today a feast.

So, be firm and joyful, don’t be anxious,
for your clan will flourish without a doubt;
the one born here, your son, is the leader
of those beset by suffering in the world.

The signs on the body of this illustrious one,
with the brilliance of gold, the radiance of a lamp,
foretell that he’ll be either an Awakened Seer,
or a World Conqueror on the earth among men.

Should he desire world sovereignty through
might and right,
he will stand on the earth at the head of all kings,
like the light of the sun,
at the head of all heavenly lights.

1.35

Going to the forest, should he seek release,
by his knowledge and truth he will vanquish
all doctrines and stand on earth, like Meru,
the king of mountains, among all the hills.

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1.40

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nidarśanāny] atra ca no nibodha.

yad rāja|śāstram Bhṛgur Aṅgirā vā
 na cakratur vamśa|karāv ṛṣī tau
 tayoḥ sutau saumya sasarjatus tat
 kālena Šukraś ca Bṛhas|patiś ca.

As pure gold is the best of all metals,
 Meru of mountains, ocean of waters,
 moon of planets, sun of fires,
 so your son is the best of men.

His eyes gaze steadily without blinking,*
 they are limpid and wide, blazing yet mild,
 They are steady and with long black lashes;
 how can these eyes of his not see all things?"

The king then told those twice-born men:

"Why do we see these wondrous signs in him,
 and not in previous noble kings?"

The brahmins then said this to him:

"Wisdom, deeds of wide acclaim,
 and the fame of kings:
 there's no earlier or later with respect to these.
 For every effect there's a cause;
 that's the way nature operates;
 learn from us parallels to this."

1.40

The treatise on kings that Bhrigu
 and Ángiras failed to compose,
 two seers who established dynastic lines,
 Was authored in due course, my lord,
 by their sons, Shukra and Brihas·pati.*

Sārasvataś c' āpi jagāda naṣṭam
 vedam̄ punar yam̄ dadṛśur na pūrve;
 Vyāsas tath" āinam̄ bahudhā cakāra
 na yam̄ Vasiṣṭhaḥ kṛtavān alśaktih.

Vālmīkir ādau ca sasarja padyam̄
 jagrantha yan na Cyavano maha"ṛṣih
 cikitsitam̄ yac ca cakāra n' Ātriḥ
 paścāt tad Ātreyo ṛṣir jagāda.

yac ca dvijatvam̄ Kuśiko na lebhe
 tad Gādhinaḥ sūnur avāpa, rājan;
 velām̄ samudre Sagaraś ca dadhre
 n' Ēkṣvākavo yām̄ prathamam̄ babandhuḥ.

1.45 ācāryakam̄ yoga|vidhau dvi|jānām
 a|prāptam anyair Janako jagāma
 khyātāni karmāṇi ca yāni Śaureḥ
 Šūr'ādayas teṣv a|balā babbūvuḥ.

tasmāt pramāṇam̄ na vayo na vamśaḥ
 kaś cit kva cic chraiṣṭhyam upaiti loke;
 rājñām̄ ṣiṇām̄ ca hi tāni tāni
 kṛtāni putrair a|kṛtāni pūrvaiḥ.»

evam̄ nṛpaḥ pratyayitair dviljais tair
 āśvāsitaś c' āpy abhinanditaś ca
 śaṅkām an|iṣṭām vijahau manastāḥ
 praharṣam ev' ādhikam āruroha.

Sarásvata proclaimed again the lost Veda,
 which men of earlier times had failed to see;
 Vyasa, likewise, split it into many sections,
 something Vasíshtha could not accomplish.*

Valmíki was the first to create a verse text,
 something Chyávana, the great sage,
 failed to produce;*

The medical text that Atri failed to produce,
 after him the seer Attréya composed.*

The twice-born status that Kúshika could not win
 was secured, O king, by the offspring of Gadhin;*
 Ságara set the boundaries of the ocean,
 which earlier the Ikshvákus could not establish.*

Jánaka taught the Yogic path to twice-born men, 1.45
 a position not attained by anyone else;*

And Shura and his kin lacked the strength
 to perform

the famous deeds that Shauri accomplished.

So, age and lineage are not a yardstick;
 anyone anywhere may attain
 pre-eminence in the world;

Among kings and seers there are many deeds
 not performed by the elders
 but accomplished by their sons.”

Thus did those trusted twice-born men
 console the king and cheer him up;
 he removed unwholesome doubts from his mind
 and rose to a still higher level of joy.

prītaś ca tebhyo dvi|ja|sattamebhyaḥ
 sat|kāra|pūrvam̄ pradadau dhanāni
 «bhūyād ayam bhūmi|patir yath”|ôkto
 yāyāj jarām etya vanāni c’ êti.»

ath’ ô nimittaiś ca tapo|balāc ca
 taj janma janm’|ânta|karasya buddhvā
 Śāky’|eśvarasy’ ālayam ājagāma
 sad|dharma|tarṣād Asito maha”|rṣih.

1.50 tam brahma|vid brahma|vidam jvalantam
 brāhmyā śriyā c’ âiva tapah|śriyā ca
 rājño gurur gaurava|sat|kriyābhyaṁ
 praveśayām āsa nar’|êndra|sadma.

sa pārthiv’|ântah|pura|saṁnikarṣam
 kumāra|janm’|āgata|harṣa|vegaḥ
 viveśa dhīro vana|saṁjñay” êva
 tapah|prakarṣāc ca jar”|āśrayāc ca.

tato nṛpas tam munim āsana|sthām
 pādy’|ârghya|pūrvam̄ pratipūjya samyak
 nimantrayām āsa yath”|ôpacāram
 purā Vasiṣṭham sa iv’ Ântidevah.

«dhanyo ’smi anugrāhyam idam kulam me,
 yan mām didṛksur bhagavān upetah.
 ājñāpyatām! kim karavāṇi, saumya?
 śiṣyo ’smi, viśrambhitum arhas’ iti.»

Delighted, he honored those twice-born men,
and he gave to them rich gifts, with the wish:

“May he become a king as predicted,
And go to the forest when he is old.”

Through omens and by his ascetic might,
alerted, then, to the birth of the one
who would put an end to birth, Ásita,
the great seer, thirsting for the true dharma,*
came to the abode of the Shakya king.

That knower of brahman, blazing with the splendor
of brahman and the splendor of ascetic toil,
was ushered in by the brahman-knowing
preceptor of the king with reverence and
homage into the chamber of the king.*

1.50

Feeling the thrill at the prince’s birth, he entered
the vicinity of the king’s seraglio,
deeming it a forest and remaining steadfast,
due to the strength of his austerities,
and the succor provided by old age.

When seated, then, the king duly honored that sage,
after he had given him water for his feet
and the water of welcome, and entreated him
with all due respect, as Anti-deva
entreated Vasíshtha in former times.*

“Fortunate am I and my household is honored,
in that Your Honor has come to see me.

Command me, gentle sire! What shall I do for you?
For I am your disciple, please have faith in me.”

evam nṛpeṇ' opanimantritaḥ san
 sarveṇa bhāvena munir yathāvat
 sa vismay' | ôtphulla|viśāla|drṣṭiḥ
 gambhīra|dhīrāṇi vacāṁsy uvāca.

1.55 «mah”|ātmani tvayy upapannam etat
 priy’|ātithau tyāgini dharma|kāme
 sattv’|ānvaya|jñāna|vayo|’nurūpā
 snigdha yad evam mayi te matih syāt.

etac ca tad yena nṛpa’|ṛṣayas te
 dharmeṇa sūkṣmeṇa dhanāny avāpya
 nityam tyajanto vidhivad babhūvus
 tapobhir āḍhyā vibhavair daridrāḥ.

prayojanam yat tu mam’|ōpayāne
 tan me śṛṇu prītim upehi ca tvam
 divyā may” āditya|pathē śrutā vāg
 ‘bodhāya jātas tanayas tav’ ēti.»

śrutvā vacas tac ca manaś ca yuktvā
 jñātvā nimittaś ca tato ’smi upetaḥ
 didṛksayā Śākyā|kula|dhvajasya
 Śakra|dhvajasy’ ēva samucchritasya.»

When he was entreated thus by the king,
 in a fitting manner and full of love,
 the sage uttered these words, wise and profound,
 his large eyes in amazement opened wide.

“This befits you—noble, hospitable,
 generous, and a lover of dharma—
 That you should show me this loving regard,
 fitting your character and family,
 fitting your wisdom and your age.

1.55

And this is that subtle dharma by which
 those royal sages, having obtained wealth,
 Always ceded it according to rule,
 becoming thus poor in wealth,
 but rich in austerity.

But as to the reason for my visit,
 listen to it and be joyful at heart;
 On the sun’s path I heard a voice divine:
 ‘To you a son is born
 For Awakening.’*

When I heard those words, I focused my mind,
 and comprehended by means of omens;
 So, I have come with the desire to see
 this banner of the Shakya race,
 like the banner of Shakra, raised up high.”

ity etad evam vacanam niśamya
 praharṣa|saṁbhrānta|gatir nar'|ēndraḥ
 ādāya dhātry|aṅka|gataṁ kumāram
 saṁdarśayām āsa tapo|dhanāya.

1.60 cakr'|aṅka|pādaṁ sa tato maha”|ṛṣir
 jāl'|āvanaddh'|āṅgulī|pāṇī|pādaṁ
 s'|ōrṇa|bhruvam̄ vāraṇa|vasti|kośam̄
 sa|vismayaṁ rāja|sutam̄ dadarśa.

dhātry|aṅka|saṁviṣṭam aveksya c' āinam̄
 devy|aṅka|saṁviṣṭam iv' Āgni|sūnum
 babhūva pakṣm'|ānta|vicañcit'|âśrur
 niśvasya c' āiva tri|div'|ōnmukho 'bhūt.

drṣṭv” Āsitam̄ tv aśru|pariplut'|âkṣam̄
 snehāt tanū|jasya nṛpaś cakampe;
 sa|gadgadaṁ bāṣpa|kaṣāya|kaṇṭhaḥ
 papraccha sa prāñjalir ānat'|āṅgaḥ.

«alp'|āntaram̄ yasya vapiḥ surebhyo
 bahv|adbhutam̄ yasya ca janma dīptam̄
 yasy' ottamam̄ bhāvinam̄ āttha c' ārtham̄
 tam̄ prekṣya kasmāt tava, dhīra, bāṣpah?

api sthir'|āyur bhagavan kumāraḥ?
 kac cin na śokāya mama prasūtaḥ?
 labdhā katham̄ cit salil'|āñjalir me
 na khalv imam̄ pātum upaiti kālaḥ?

Hearing these words, then, the king
 with unsteady steps—
 so overwhelmed was he with great delight—
 took the prince lying on the lap of his nurse,
 and showed him to that man rich in austerity.

With amazement, then, the great seer 1.60
 gazed at the prince—
 the soles of his feet with marks of a wheel,
 his hands and feet with webbed fingers and toes,
 a circle of hair between his eyebrows,
 genitals ensheathed like an elephant's.*

Seeing him resting on his nurse's lap,
 like Agni's son on the goddess's lap,*
 tears danced at the edge of his eyelashes,
 and, heaving a sigh, he looked up to heaven.

But seeing Ásita, his eyes drenched with tears,
 the king trembled out of love for his son;
 with faltering speech, his throat choked with tears,
 with bent body and folded palms, he asked:

“His body differs little from that of the gods,
 numerous wonders attended his dazzling birth,
 And his future lot, you said, will be eminent;
 seeing him, then, why do you,
 a steadfast man, shed tears?

Will the prince, Lord, have a long life?
 Surely he was not born to cause me grief?
 This handful of water I have somehow obtained,
 surely Time will not come to lap it up?*

1.65 apy a|kṣayam me yaśaso nidhānam?
 kac cid dhruvo me kula|hasta|sārah?
 api prayāyāmi sukham paratra
 supto 'pi putre '|nimiṣ'|âika|cakṣuh?

kac cin na me jātam a|phullam eva
 kula|pravālam pariśoṣa|bhāgi?
 kṣipram, vibho, brūhi na me 'sti śāntih,
 sneham sute vetsi hi bāndhavānām.»

ity āgat'|āvegam an|iṣṭa|bhuddhyā
 buddhvā nar'|ēndram sa munir babhāṣe
 «mā bhūn matis te, nrpa, kā cid anyā
 niḥ|saṁśayam tad yad avocam asmi.

n' āsy' ānyathātvam prati vikriyā me
 svām vañcanām tu prati viklavo 'smi
 kālo hi me yātum ayam ca jāto
 jāti|kṣayasy' ā|su|labhasya boddhā.

vihāya rājyam viṣayeṣv an|āsthas
 tīvraiḥ prayatnair adhigamya tattvam
 jagaty ayam moha|tamo nihantum
 jvaliṣyati jñāna|mayo hi sūryah.

Will the store of my fame never be depleted?
 Will my family's power be ever secure?
 In death, will I enter the yonder world in bliss
 although asleep, with one eye open in my son?

1.65

Surely this my family shoot has not sprouted
 to wither away before it has borne flowers?
 Tell me quickly, My Lord, I have no peace,
 for you know a father's love for his son."

When he realized that the king was distraught
 by the thought of misfortune, the seer said:

"Do not let your mind be in any way perturbed;
 what I said will come true, O King,
 there is no doubt.

I'm perturbed not because he'll come to harm;
 I have been cheated, that's why I'm distressed;
 It's time for me to leave just as he's born
 who will realize how to destroy birth,
 a task so difficult to accomplish.

For quitting his realm, detached from pleasures,
 realizing the truth through arduous efforts,
 This sun of knowledge will blaze forth
 in this world to dispel
 the darkness of delusion.

1.70 duḥkh' | ārṇavād vyādhi | vikīrṇa | phenāj
 jarā | taraṅgān maraṇ' | ôgra | vegāt
 uttārayiṣyaty ayam uhyamānam
 ārtam jagaj jñāna | mahā | plavena.

prajñ" | āmbu | vegām sthira | śīla | vaprām
 samādhi | śitām vrata | cakravākām
 asy' ottamām dharma | nadīm pravṛttām
 tṛṣṇ" | ārditaḥ pāsyati jīva | lokah.

duḥkh' | ārditebhyo viṣay' | āvṛtebhyah
 samsāra | kāntāra | patha | sthitebhyah
 ākhyāsyati hy esa vimokṣa | mārgam
 mārga | pranaṣṭebhya iv' ādhvagebhyah.

vidahyamānāya janāya loke
 rāg' | āgnin" āyam viṣay' | ēndhanena
 prahlādam ādhāsyati dharma | vṛṣṭyā
 vṛṣṭyā mahā | megha iv' ātap' | ānte.

From this sea of grief,
 strewn with the foam of sickness,
 with waves of old age
 and the fearsome tides of death,
 He will rescue with the mighty boat of knowledge
 this stricken world carried away by the current.

1.70

The living world that's tormented by thirst
 will drink
 from the lofty stream of dharma
 flowing from him;
 A stream that is made cool by mental trance,
 a stream whose current is wisdom,
 whose banks are steadfast discipline,
 whose *chakra-vaka* ducks are vows.

To those who are tormented by suffering,
 ensnared by the objects of sense,
 roaming through samsara's wild tracks,
 This one will proclaim the way to release,
 as to travelers who've lost their way.

Upon men in this world who are being scorched
 by the fire of passion, whose fuel
 is the objects of the senses,
 He'll pour relief with the rain of dharma,
 like a rain cloud pouring down rain,
 at the end of the summer heat.

trsñ”|ârgalam moha|tamah|kapâtam
 dvâram prajânâm apayâna|hetoh
 vipâtayisyaty ayam uttamena
 sad|dharma|tâdena dur|âsadena.

1.75 svair moha|pâśaiḥ pariveṣṭitasya
 duḥkh’|âbhîbhûtasya nir|âśrayasya
 lokasya sambudhya ca dharma|râjaḥ
 kariṣyate bandhana|mokṣam eṣaḥ.

tan mā kṛthāḥ śokam imam̄ prati tvam̄
 asmin sa śocyō ’sti manusya|loke
 mohena vā kāma|sukhair madād vā
 yo naiṣṭhikam̄ śroṣyati n’ âsyā dharmam.

bhraṣṭasya tasmāc ca guṇād ato me
 dhyānāni labdhv” âpy a|kṛt’|ârthat” âiva;
 dharmasya tasy’ â|śravaṇād aham̄ hi
 manye vipattim̄ tri|dive ’pi vāsam.»

iti śrut’|ârthaḥ sa|suhṛt sa|dāras
 tyaktvā viṣādam̄ mumude nar’|êndraḥ
 «evam̄|vidho ’yam tanayo mam’ êti»
 mene sa hi svām̄ api sāravattām.

With the irresistible supreme blow
 of the true dharma, he will burst open
 The door whose bolt is thirst and whose panels
 are delusion and torpor,
 so that creatures may escape.

Gaining full Awakening, this king of dharma
 will release the world from bondage,

1.75

A world bound with the snares of its own delusion,
 a world overcome by grief,
 a world that has no refuge.

Do not grieve, therefore, on account of him;
 but who through delusion or pride,
 or the love of pleasures,
 Listens not to his absolute dharma,
 for him one should grieve
 in this world of men.

Because I'm deprived of that distinction,
 I have failed to attain the final goal,
 although I have attained the transic states;
 For, because I have not heard his dharma,
 even living in the triple heaven
 I consider as a calamity."

The king, when he heard that explanation,
 rejoiced with his wife and his friends,
 giving up his melancholy;
 thinking, "Such indeed is this son of mine!"
 he deemed it also his own good fortune.

«ārṣeṇa mārgenā tu yāsyat' iti»
 cintā|vidheyam hṛdayam cakāra
 na khalv asau na priya|dharma|pakṣah
 samtāna|nāśat tu bhayaṁ dadarśa.

1.80 atha munir Asito nivedya tattvam
 sutu|niyatam sutu|viklavāya rājne
 sa|bahu|matam udīkṣyamāṇa|rūpah
 pavana|pathena yath" |āgataṁ jagāma.

kṛta|mitir anujā|sutam ca dṛṣṭvā
 muni|vacana|śravaṇe ca tan|matau ca
 bahu|vidham anukampayā sa sādhuḥ
 priya|sutavad viniyojayām cakāra.

nara|patir api putra|janma|tuṣṭo
 viṣaya|gatāni vimucya bandhanāni
 kula|sa|dṛśam acīkarad yathāvat
 priya|tanayas tanayasya jāta|karma.

daśasu pariṇatesv ahaḥsu c' āiva
 prayata|manāḥ parayā mudā parītaḥ
 akuruta japa|homa|maṅgal'|ādyāḥ
 parama|bhavāya sutasya devat" |ējyāḥ.

api ca śata|sahasra|pūrṇa|samkhyāḥ
 sthira|balavat|tanayāḥ sa|hema|śringīḥ
 an|upagata|jarāḥ payasvinīr gāḥ
 svayam adadāt sutu|vṛddhaye dvil|jebhyāḥ.

But his heart was still filled with anxiety,
thinking, "He will follow the path of seers;"
not that he didn't love the side of dharma;
yet he saw danger: the end of his line.

Having declared the truth about his son
to the king, much distraught about his son,
the sage Ásita then went as he came,
as they looked up with reverence at him,
along the path of the wind.

1.80

Seeing his younger sister's son, that holy man,*
having attained right knowledge, in his compassion,
instructed him in many ways, as if he were
his own dear son, to listen to the sage's words,
and to follow his advice.

The king too, delighted at his son's birth,
threw open the prisons within his realm;
he performed his son's birth rite as prescribed,
in a way befitting his family,
out of deep love for his son.

When the ten days had passed and his mind purified,*
filled with supreme joy, he offered the divine rites,
with prayers, offerings, and other auspicious rites,
for his son's supreme welfare.

For the prosperity of his son, furthermore,
he gave by himself a hundred thousand milch cows,
in the prime of their youth,
their horns gilded with gold,
cows with strong and sturdy calves.*

1.85 bahu|vidha|viṣayāś tato yat'|ātmā
 sva|hṛdaya|toṣa|karīḥ kriyā vidhāya
 guṇavati niyate śive muhūrte
 matim akaron muditaḥ pura|praveśe.

dvi|rada|rada|mayīm ath' ô mah" |ârhāṁ
 sita|sitapuṣpa|bhṛtāṁ maṇi|pradīpāṁ
 abhajata śivikāṁ śivāya devī
 tanayavatī praṇipatya devatābhyaḥ.

puram atha purataḥ praveśya patnīṁ
 sthavira|jan'|ânugatāṁ apatyā|nāthāṁ
 nr̥|patir api jagāma paura|saṁghair
 divam a|maraɪ Maghavān iv' ârcyamānaḥ.

bhavam atha vigāhya Śākyā|rājo
 Bhava iva Ṣaṇ|mukhal|janmanā pratītaḥ
 «idam idam» iti harṣa|pūrṇa|vaktro
 bahu|vidha|puṣṭi|yaśas|karam vyadhatta.

iti nara|pati|putra|janma|vṛddhyā
 sa|jana|padam Kapil'|āhvayaṁ puram tat
 dhana|da|puram iv' āpsaro|vakīrṇam
 muditam abhūn Nala|kūbara|prasūtau.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye Bhagavat|prasūtir nāma
 prathamah sargah

Then, his self controlled, he carried out rites
for varied ends, bringing joy to his heart,
and, when a fine auspicious time was fixed,
gladly resolved to enter the city.

The queen paid homage to the gods and with her son
got onto a costly ivory palanquin,
with garlands made of white *sita-pushpa* flowers,
and lamps studded with precious stones.

The king then made the queen enter the city
before him,
followed by aged women, accompanied by her child;
he too entered the city, extolled by its citizens,
as Mághavan once entered heaven,
extolled by the gods.

The Shakya king then proceeded to his palace,
joyful like Bhava at the birth of Shan-mukha;
his face beaming with delight, he made arrangements
to secure manifold prosperity and fame,
saying, “Do this! Do that!”

Thus the city named Kápila and the outlying districts
rejoiced at the prosperity from the birth of the prince,
like the city of the wealth-giving god,*
thronging with *ápsarases*,
at Nala-kúbara’s birth.

Thus ends the first canto named “The Birth of the Lord”
of the great poem “Life of the Buddha.”



CANTO 2
LIFE IN THE LADIES' CHAMBERS

2.1 **A** JANMANO JANMA|jar”|ânta|gasya
tasy’ âtmaljasy’ âtmaljitat̄ sa rājā
ahany ahany arthal|gaj’|âsva|mitrair
vṛddhim yayau Sindhur iv’ âmbu|vegaiḥ.

dhanasya ratnasya ca tasya tasya
kṛt’|âkṛtasy’ âiva ca kāñcanasya
tadā hi n’ âikān sa nidhīn avāpa
mano|rathasy’ âpy ati|bhāra|bhūtān.

ye Padma|kalpair api ca dvip’|êndrair
na maṇḍalam śakyam ih’ âbhinetum
mad’|ôtkatā Haimavatā gajās te
vin” âpi yatnād upastasthur enam.

nān”|âṅka|cihnair nava|hema|bhāṅḍair
vibhūṣitair lamba|saṭais tath” ânyaiḥ
samcukṣubhe c’ âsyā puraṁ turaṅgair
balena maitryā ca dhanena c’ āptaiḥ.

2.5 puṣṭāś ca tuṣṭāś ca tath” âsyā rájye
sādhvyo ’|rajaskā guṇavat|payaskāḥ
udagra|vatsaiḥ sahitā babhūvur
bahvyo bahu|ksīra|duhaś ca gāvah.

madhya|sthataṁ tasya ripur jagāma
madhya|stha|bhāvah prayayau su|hṛttvam
viśeṣato dārḍhyam iyāya mitram
dvāv asya pakṣāv a|paras tu n’ āsa.

EVER SINCE THE birth of his son,
who had reached the end of birth and old age,
the self-controlled king prospered day by day,
with wealth, elephants, horses, and allies,
like the Indus with the rush of waters.*

2.I

For at that time he won untold treasures,
all sorts of wealth and gems,
gold, both wrought and unwrought;
treasures that are too much to bear even
for that chariot of the mind called desire.

Himalayan elephants, made frenzied by rut,
which even elephant kings equal to Padma,
could not steer to the stables here,
served him even without effort.

His city shook with the stomping of the horses,
some arrayed with various distinctive marks,
some bedecked with trappings made of new gold,
some adorned and others with flowing manes,
acquired by force, purchased, or given by allies.

In his realm there were large numbers of cows, plump and content, superb and without stain, yielding fine and abundant milk, together with outstanding calves.

2.5

His enemies became neutrals,
the neutrals turned into allies,
allies became markedly strong;
he had two parties, the third disappeared.*

tath” âsyā mand’|ânila|mehga|śabdaḥ
 saudāminī|kuṇḍala|maṇḍit’|âbhraḥ
 vin” âśma|varṣ’|âśani|pāta|doṣaiḥ
 kāle ca deśe pravavarṣa devaḥ.

ruroha sasyam phalavad yatha”|rtu
 tad” ā|kṛten’ āpi kr̄si|śramena
 tā eva c’ âsy’ âuṣadhayo rasena
 sāreṇa c’ āiv’ âbhyaḍhikā babhūvuh.

śarīra|saṃdeha|kare ’pi kāle
 saṃgrāma|saṃmarda iva pravṛtte
 sva|sthāḥ sukham c’ āiva nir|āmayam ca
 prajajñire kāla|vaśena nāryaḥ.

2.10 prthag vratibhyo vibhave ’pi garhye
 na prārthayanti sma narāḥ parebhyah
 abhyarthitah sūkṣma|dhano ’pi c’ āryas
 tadā na kaś cid vimukho babhūva.

n’ ā|gauravo bandhuṣu n’ āpy a|dātā
 n’ āiv’ ā|vrato n’ ân|ṛtiko na himsrah
 āśit tadā kaś cana tasya rājye
 rājño Yayāter iva Nāhuṣasya.

udyāna|dev’|āyatan’|āśramāṇām
 kūpa|prapā|puṣkarinī|vanānām
 cakruḥ kriyās tatra ca dharma|kāmāḥ
 pratyakṣataḥ svargam iv’ ḥopalabhyā.

Heaven, likewise, poured down showers for him
at the proper time and the proper place,
the gentle sound of wind and thunder clouds,
and rings of lightning adorning the sky,
without the bale of hail or lightning strikes.

Grain grew fruitful then at the right season
even without laborious tilling;
those same medical herbs became for him
even richer in juice and potency.*

Even at that time of danger to the body,
as in the period of an armed conflict,
women gave birth with great ease and on the due date,
remaining healthy and free of disease.

Even in dire straits none begged from others,
except the men who had taken the vow;*
then a noble man of even small means
never turned his back on someone who begged.

2.10

At that time there was no one in his realm
who was rude to elders, not generous,
untruthful, hurtful, or non-observant,
as in that of King Yayáti, Náhusha's son.

In their love for dharma, they constructed
parks and temples, hermitages and wells,
water counters and lotus ponds and groves,
as if they had seen heaven with their own eyes.

muktaś ca dur|bhikṣa|bhay'|āmayebhyo
 hr̥ṣṭo janaḥ svarga iv' ābhireme;
 patnīm patir vā mahiṣī patīm vā
 parasparam na vyabhiceratuś ca.

kaś cit siṣeve rataye na kāmam;
 kām'|ârtham artham na jugopa kaś cit;
 kaś cid dhan'|ârtham na cacāra dharmam;
 dharmāya kaś cin na cakāra hiṁsām.

2.15 stey'|ādibhiś c' āpy aribhiś ca naṣṭam
 sva|sthām sva|cakram para|cakra|muktam
 kṣemam su|bhikṣam ca babhūva tasya
 pur" Ânaranyasya yath" âiva rāṣṭre.

tadā hi taj|janmani tasya rājño
 Manor iv' Āditya|sutasya rājye
 cacāra harṣah praṇanāśa pāpmā
 jajvāla dharmah kaluṣah śāśāma.

evam|vidhā rāja|kulasya saṁpat
 sarv'|ârtha|siddhiś ca yato babhūva
 tato nr̥|pas tasya sutasya nāma
 «Sarv'|ârtha|siddho 'yam iti» pracakre.

devī tu Māyā vibudha'|ṛṣi|kalpam
 dr̥ṣṭvā viśālam tanaya|prabhāvam
 jātam praharṣam na śāśaka sodhum,
 tato nivāsāya divam jagāma.

Freed from famine, from danger and disease,
 people, thrilled, rejoiced as if in heaven;
 husbands were never unfaithful to wives,
 or wives to their husbands.

No one sought pleasure for the sake of lust;
 no one protected wealth for pleasure's sake;
 no one served dharma for the sake of wealth;
 no one caused injury for dharma's sake.*

Independent, free of theft and such vice,
 free of enemies and enemy rule,
 his kingdom was prosperous and peaceful,
 like Anaránya's kingdom long ago.

2.15

For, at his birth, in the realm of that king,
 as in that of Manu, Adítya's son,
 joy ran rampant and evil disappeared,
 dharma blazed forth and sin was extinguished.

Such was the affluence of the royal house,
 as also the success of all his aims;
 the king, therefore, gave this name to his son:

"He is Sarvártha·siddha!
 Successful in all his aims!"

But when queen Maya saw the immense might
 of her son, like that of a seer divine,
 she could not bear the delight it caused her;
 so she departed to dwell in heaven.

tataḥ kumāram sura|garbha|kalpaṁ
 snehena bhāvena ca nir|viśeṣam
 māṭṛ|svasā māṭṛ|sama|prabhāvā
 samvardhayām ātmal|ja|vad babhūva.

2.20 tataḥ sa bāl'|ârka iv' ôdaya|sthāḥ
 samīrito vahnir iv' ânilena
 krameṇa samyag vavṛdhe kumāras
 tār'|âdhipah paksā iv' â|tamaske.

tato mah”|ârhāṇi ca candanāni
 ratn'|āvalīś c' âuśadhibhiḥ sa|garbhāḥ
 mr̥ga|prayuktān rathakāmś ca haimān
 ācakrire 'smai su|hṛd|ālayebhyah.
 vayo|'nurūpāṇi ca bhūṣaṇāni
 hiraṇ|mayān hasti|mrg'|âśvakāmś ca
 rathāmś ca go|putraka|samprayuktān
 putriś ca cāmīkara|rūpya|citrāḥ.

evam sa tais tair viṣay'|ôpacārair
 vayo|'nurūpair upacaryamāṇāḥ
 bālo 'py a|bāla|pratimo babhūva
 dhṛtyā ca śaucena dhiyā śriyā ca.

vayaś ca kaumāram atītya samyak
 samprāpya kāle pratipatti|karma
 alpair ahobhir bahu|varṣa|gamyā
 jagrāha vidyāḥ sva|kul'|ânurūpāḥ.

Then, his mother's sister, in majesty
 equal to his mother, brought up the prince,
 who was equal to a son of a god,
 without distinction in love and fondness,
 as if he were her own son.

Then, gradually the prince grew up well,
 like the young sun over the eastern hills,
 like a fire that's fanned by the wind,
 like the moon in the bright fortnight.

2.20

Then, they brought for him from houses of friends,
 expensive sandalwood, strings of jewels
 filled with medicinal herbs,
 golden toy-carts drawn by deer,
 ornaments appropriate for his age,
 toy elephants, deer, and golden horses,
 chariots yoked to toy oxen,
 and dolls resplendent with silver and gold.

Entertained thus by various sensory delights
 appropriate for his age, although a mere child,
 he appeared unlike a child in his steadfastness,
 and in purity, wisdom, and nobility.

He passed through his childhood years
 in the proper way;
 he went through initiation at the proper time;
 in a few days he grasped the sciences
 that were suitable for his family,
 that commonly take many years to grasp.

2.25 naiḥśreyasam tasya tu bhavyam artham
 śrutvā purastād Asitād maha'ṛṣeḥ
 kameṣu saṅgam janayām babhūva
 vanāni yāyād iti Śākyā|rājah.

kulāt tato 'smai sthira|śīla|yuktāt
 sādhvīm vapur|hṛī|vinay'|ōpapannām
 Yaśodharām nāma yaśo|viśālām
 vām"|âbhidhānām Śriyam ājuhāva.

vidyotamāno vapusā pareṇa
 Sanatkumāra|pratimah kumārah
 s'|ārdham tayā Śākyā|nar'|ēndra|vadhvā
 Śacyā Śahasr'|ākṣa iv' âbhireme.

«kim cin manah|kṣobha|karam pratipam
 kathām na paśyed» iti so 'nucintya
 vāsam nr̄|po vyādiśati sma tasmai
 harmy'|ōdareśv eva na bhū|pracāram.

tataḥ śarat|toyada|pāṇḍareṣu
 bhūmau vimāneśv iva rañjiteṣu
 harmyeṣu sarva'|rtu|sukh'|āśrayeṣu
 strīṇām udārair vijahāra tūryaiḥ.

2.30 kalair hi cāmīkara|baddha|kakṣair
 nārī|kar'|āgr'|âbhihatair mr̄daṅgaiḥ
 var'|āpsaro|nṛtya|samaiś ca nṛtyaiḥ
 Kailāsa|vat tad|bhavanam̄ rarāja.

He had heard earlier from Ásita, the great sage,
that the highest bliss would be his son's future lot;
so the Shakya king made him attached to pleasures,
fearing that his son would repair to the forest.

2.25

Then, from a family rooted in good conduct,
he summoned for him Shri, the goddess of fortune,
in the form of a virtuous maiden of great fame,
by the name of Yasho-dhara, "the bearer of fame,"
endowed with beauty, modesty, and good bearing.

Kumára, the prince, much like Sanat-kumára,
radiant with supreme beauty, enjoyed himself
with that daughter-in-law of the Shakya king,
as with Shachi, Indra the thousand-eyed god.

"How will he not see anything evil
That would cause his mind to become distressed?"

So thinking, the king assigned him chambers
confined to the top floors of the palace,
far away from the bustle on the ground.

Then, in palaces white as autumn clouds,
like divine mansions erected on earth,
with quarters providing comfort every season,
he passed his time with women playing lofty music.

His residence sparkled like Kailása,
with soft-sounding tambourines bound with gold,
women beating them with their finger tips,
dances rivaling those of lovely ápsarases.

2.30

vāgbhiḥ kalābhir lalitaiś ca hāvair
 madaiḥ sa|khelair madhuraiś ca hāsaiḥ
 tam̄ tatra nāryo ramayām̄ babbūvur
 bhrū|vañcitair ardha|nirīkṣitaiś ca.

tataḥ sa kām’|āśraya|paṇḍitābhiḥ
 strībhir gr̄hīto rati|karkaśābhiḥ
 vimāna|pr̄sthān na mahīm jagāma
 vimāna|pr̄sthād iva puṇya|karmā.

nṛpas tu tasy’ āiva vivṛddhi|hetos
 tad|bhāvin” ârthena ca codyamānah
 śame ’bhireme virarāma pāpād
 bheje damam̄ samvibabhāja sādhūn.

n’ â|dhīravat kāma|sukhe sasañje
 na sam̄rarañje viṣamam̄ jananyām
 dhṛty” êndriy’|âsvām̄ś capalān vijigye
 bandhūm̄ś ca paurām̄ś ca gunaiḥ jīgāya.

2.35 n’ âdhyaiṣṭa duḥkhāya parasya vidyām;
 jñānam̄ śivam̄ yat tu, tad adhyagīṣṭa;
 svābhyaḥ prajābhyo hi yathā tath” āiva
 sarvalprajābhyāḥ śivam̄ āśāśamse.

bham̄ bhāsuram̄ c’ Āṅgiras’|âdhidevam̄
 yathāvad ānarca tad|āyuṣe saḥ;
 juhāva havyāny a|kr̄ṣe kr̄ṣānau
 dadau dviljebhyāḥ kr̄ṣanam̄ ca gāś ca.

In that palace women entertained him
 with soft voices and alluring gestures,
 with playful drunkenness and sweet laughter,
 with curling eyebrows and sidelong glances.

Then, ensnared by women skilled in erotic arts,
 who were tireless in providing sexual delights,
 he did not come to earth from that heavenly mansion,
 as a man of good deeds, from his heavenly mansion.

But the king to secure his son's success,
 and spurred by the future foretold for him,
 delighted in calm, desisted from sin,
 practiced restraint, gave gifts to holy men.

He did not, like a fickle man, cling to sexual delights,
 with his women he did not engage in improper love,
 the unruly horses of senses he firmly controlled,
 he won over by his virtues, his kin and citizens.

He did not acquire learning to hurt other men;
 he mastered the knowledge that was beneficial;
 as to his own people, so to all the people,
 he only wished what was beneficial.

2.35

The shining constellation headed by Āngirasa,*
 he duly worshipped so that his son might have
 a long life;
 he made offerings in a blazing fire;
 on twice-born men he bestowed gold and cows.

sasnau śarīram pavitum manaś ca
 tīrth'|âmbubhiś c' āiva gun'|âmbubhiś ca
 ved'|opadiṣṭam samam ātmaljām ca
 somam papau śānti|sukham ca hārdam.

sāntvam babbhāse, na ca n' ārthavad yaj;
 jajalpa tattvam, na ca vi|priyam yat;
 sāntvam hy a|tattvam paruṣam ca tattvam
 hriy" âśakann ātmana eva vaktum.

iṣṭeṣv an|iṣṭeṣu ca kārya|vatsu
 na rāga|doṣ'|āśrayatām prapede;
 śivam siṣeve vyavahāra|śuddham
 yajñam hi mene na tathā yathā tat.

2.40 āśāvate c' ābhigatāya sadyo
 dey'|âmbubhis tarṣam acechidiṣṭa;
 yuddhād rte vṛttalparaśvadhenā
 dvid|darpan udvṛttam abebhidiṣṭa.

ekam vininye, sa jugopa sapta,
 sapt' āiva tatyāja, rarakṣa pañca;
 prāpa tri|vargam, bubudhe tri|vargam,
 jajñe dvi|vargam, prajahau dvi|vargam.

To cleanse his body he bathed with water
 from sacred fords,
 and to cleanse his mind he bathed with the waters
 of virtue;
 he imbibed the Soma that is prescribed by the Vedas,
 along with the tranquil bliss of heart produced
 by himself.

He spoke only what was pleasant,
 never anything useless;
 he spoke only what was true,
 never anything unpleasant;
 he was unable, through shame, to say even to himself,
 anything pleasant but untrue,
 anything harsh though true.

Toward litigants, whether friend or foe,
 he never displayed either love or hate;
 honesty in court he practiced as a sacred act,
 for he deemed it better than a sacrificial rite.

With the waters of gifts he quenched at once
 the thirst of supplicants who flocked to him;
 and he squelched the swollen pride of his foes
 with the battle ax of virtue, not war.

2.40

One he disciplined, seven he guarded,
 seven too he gave up, five he secured;
 he attained the triple set, he fathomed the triple set,
 he discerned the double set, he cast off the double set.*

kṛt'|āgaso 'pi pratipādya vadhyān
 n' ājīghanan n' āpi ruṣā dadarśa;
 babandha sāntvena phalena c' āitāṁs
 tyāgo 'pi teṣāṁ hy a|nayāya dṛṣṭah.

ārṣāṇy acārīt parama|vratāni;
 vairāṇy ahāsic cira|saṁbhṛtāni;
 yaśāṁsi c' āpad guṇa|gandhavanti;
 rajāṁsy ahārṣin malinī|karāṇi.

na c' ājihīrṣid balim a|pravṛttam;
 na c' ācikīrṣit para|vastv|abhidhyām;
 na c' āvivakṣid dviśatām a|dharmam;
 na c' āvivakṣidd hr̥dayena manyum.

2.45 tasmiṁs tathā bhūmi|patau pravṛtte
 bhṛtyāś ca paurāś ca tath" āiva ceruh,
 śam'|ātmake cetasi viprasanne
 prayuktalyogasya yath" ēndriyāṇi.

kāle tataś cāru|payo|dharāyāṁ
 Yaśodharāyāṁ sva|yaśo|dharāyāṁ
 Šauḍhodane Rāhu|sapatna|vaktro
 jajñe suto Rāhula eva nāmnā.

ath' eṣṭa|putraḥ parama|pratītaḥ
 kulasya vr̥ddhiṁ prati bhūmi|pālah
 yath" āiva putra|prasave nananda
 tath" āiva pautra|prasave nananda.

Even criminals judged to be worthy of death,
he did not kill or even look at them with rage;
he inflicted on them lenient punishments,
for their release too is viewed as wrong policy.

He performed severe vows that were practiced by seers;
he eliminated long-standing enmities;
he attained fame that was perfumed by his virtues;
he abandoned passions that produce defilement.

He did not wish to raise inordinate taxes,
he did not wish to take what belonged to others,
he did not wish to reveal his foes' *adharma*,
he did not wish to carry anger in his heart.

When that lord of the earth behaved in this manner,
his servants and citizens acted the same way,
like the senses of a man engaged in Yoga,
when his mind has become fully calm and tranquil.

2.45

Then in time Yashodhara, the "bearer of fame,"
bearing alluring breasts and bearing her own fame,
begot a son for Shuddhodana's son,
a son who had a face like Rahu's foe,
a son who was, indeed, named Ráhula.*

Then, having obtained the son he desired,
family success being fully assured,
just as the king rejoiced at the birth of his son,
he rejoiced also at the birth of his grandson.

«putrasya me putra|gato mam' êva
 snehaḥ katham syād» iti jāta|harsah
 kāle sa tam tam vidhim ālalambe
 putra|priyah svargam iv' āruruksan.

sthitvā pathi prāthama|kalpikānām
 rāja'|ṛṣabhāṇām yaśas" ânvitānām
 śuklāny a|muktv" āpi tapāṁsy atapta
 yajñaiś ca himsā|rahitair ayaṣṭa.

2.50 ajājvaliṣṭ' ātha sa puṇya|karmā
 nṛpa|śriyā c' āiva tapah|śriyā ca
 kulena vṛttena dhiyā ca dīptas
 tejah sahasr'|āṁśur iv' ôtsisṛksuh.

Svāyambhuvaṁ c' ārcikam arcayitvā
 jajāpa putra|sthitaye sthita|śrīḥ;
 cakāra karmāṇi ca duṣ|karāṇi
 prajāḥ sisṛksuh Ka iv' ādi|kāle.

"Surely, my son will love his son
 just as much as I love him!
 How could it be otherwise?"

So thinking, the king, overcome with joy,
 carried out one rite after another
 at proper times, in his love for his son,
 as if longing to ascend to heaven.

Following the path of the early kings,
 those mighty bulls among kings, of wide fame,
 he performed ascetic toil
 without casting off his white clothes,
 he offered sacrifices
 without injuring living beings.*

Then, that man of good deeds brightly blazed forth
 with the luster of king and ascetic,
 shining by reason of virtue,
 wisdom and family,
 as if wishing to radiate light
 like the thousand-rayed sun.

With his sovereignty stable, he worshipped, softly
 reciting the verses of the Self-existent
 for his son's stability;
 he performed most difficult deeds, like Ka, the Creator,
 when in the beginning he desired
 to bring forth creatures.*

tatyāja śastram, vimamarśa śāstram;
 śamam siṣeve, niyamam viṣehe;
 vaś” īva kam cid viṣayam na bheje;
 pit” ēva sarvān viṣayān dadarśa.

babbhāra rājyam sa hi putra|hetoh,
 putram kul’|ārtham, yaśase kulam tu,
 svargāya śabdam, divam ātmā|hetor,
 dharm’|ārtham ātmā|sthitim ācakāṅkṣa.

evam sa dharmam vividham cakāra
 sadbhīr nipātam śrutitaś ca siddham
 «drṣṭvā katham putra|mukham suto me
 vanam na yāyād» iti nāthamānah.

2.55 rirakṣiṣantah śriyam ātmā|saṁsthām
 rakṣanti putrān bhūvi bhūmi|pālāḥ;
 putram nar’|ēndrah sa tu dharma|kāmo
 rarakṣa dharmād viṣayeṣu muñcan.

He laid down the sword and mulled over texts;
 he pursued calm and bore rules of restraint;
 like a sovereign, he was not enslaved
 to the sensory realm,
 like a father, he regarded all the regions of his realm.

For he fostered his realm for the sake of his son,
 his son for his family, family for fame,
 scriptures for heaven, heaven for the sake of self,
 for dharma he sought the endurance of his self.

Thus he performed diverse acts of dharma,
 followed by good men, ordained by scripture,
 with the prayer:

“Surely, once he sees the face of his son,
 my son would not repair to the forest!
 How could it be otherwise?”

Desiring to guard their own sovereign power,
 the lords of the earth guard on earth their sons;
 but though he was a lover of dharma,
 this king guarded his son against dharma,
 letting him loose amidst sensual pleasures.

2.55

LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

vanam an|upama|sattvā bodhi|sattvās tu sarve
viṣaya|sukha|rasa|jñā jagmur utpanna|putrāḥ;
ata upacita|karmā rūḍha|mūle 'pi hetau
sa ratim upasiṣeve bodhim āpan na yāvat.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye 'ntah|pura|vihāro nāma
dvitīyah sargah.

But all bodhisattvas of unrivaled spirit*
went to the forest, after they'd tasted
the pleasures of the sensory objects,
and after a son had been born to them.
Although the cause had grown deep roots
 by his collected good deeds,*
until he reached Awakening, therefore,
 he pursued sensual pleasures.

Thus ends the second canto named "Life in the Ladies'
Chambers" of the great poem "Life of the Buddha."



CANTO 3
BECOMING DEJECTED

3.1 **T**ATAḥ KADĀ cīn mṛdu|śādvalāni
pumṣ|kokil’|ônnādital|pādapāni
śuśrāva padm’|ākara|maṇḍitāni
gītair nibaddhāni sa kānanāni.

śrutvā tataḥ strī|jana|vallabhānām
mano|jñā|bhāvām pura|kānanānām
bahih|prayāṇaya cakāra buddhim
antar|gr̥he nāga iv’ āvaruddhaḥ.

tato nr̥|pas tasya niśamya bhāvām
putr’|ābhidhānasya mano|rathasya
snehasya lakṣmyā vayasaś ca yogyām
ājñāpayām āsa vihāra|yātrām.

nivartayām āsa ca rāja|mārge
sampātam ārtasya pṛthag|janasya
«mā bhūt kumārah su|kumāra|cittah
samvigna|cetā iti» manyamānah.

3.5 pratyāṅga|hīnān vikal’|ēndriyāmś ca
jīrn’|ātur’|ādīn kṛpaṇāmś ca dikṣu
tataḥ samutsārya pareṇa sāmnā
śobhām parām rāja|pathasya cakruḥ.

tataḥ kṛte śrīmati rāja|mārge
śrīmān vinīt’|ānucaraḥ kumārah
prāsāda|pṛṣṭhād avatīrya kāle
kṛt’|ābhyanujño nr̥|pam abhyagacchat.

THEN, ONE DAY he heard songs depicting groves,
with soft fields of grass, with trees resounding
with the songs of male cuckoos,
and adorned with lotus ponds.

Then, he heard how enchanting were the city parks,
parks that were very much loved by the women folk;
so he made up his mind to visit the outdoors,
restless like an elephant confined in a house.

Then, hearing about the wish of that heart's desire
called 'son,' the king ordered a pleasure excursion
befitting his love and sovereign power,
and in keeping with the age of his son.

He prevented the common folks with afflictions
from gathering on the royal highway, thinking:

"Lest the tender mind of the prince
Thereby become perturbed."

Then, removing very gently from every side
those lacking a limb or with defective organs,
the wretched, the decrepit, the sick, and the like,
they heightened the grandeur of the royal highway.

Then, when the royal highway had been made
splendid,
the splendid prince along with his trained attendants,
came down at the right time from atop the palace,
and, when permitted, came into the king's presence.

ath' ô nar'|êndraḥ sutam āgat'|âśruḥ
 śirasy upāghrāya ciram nirikṣya
 «gacch' eti» c' ājñāpayati sma vācā
 snehān na c' āinam manasā mumoca.

tataḥ sa jāmbūnada|bhāṇḍa|bhṛdbhir
 yuktam caturbhīr nibhṛtais turaṇ|gaiḥ
 a|kliba|vidvac|chuci|rāsmi|dhāram
 hiran|mayam syandanam āruroha.

tataḥ prakīrn' |ōjjvala|puṣpal|jālam
 viṣakta|mālyam pracalat|patākam
 mārgam prapede sadṛś' |ānuyātraś
 candraḥ sa|nakṣatra iv' ântar|ikṣam.

3.10 kautūhalāt sphītataraiś ca netrair
 nīl'|ôtpal'|ârdhair iva kīryamāṇam
 śanaiḥ śanai rāja|patham jagāhe
 pauraiḥ samantād abhivikṣyamāṇah.

tam tuṣṭuvuḥ saumya|guṇena ke cid,
 vavandire diptatayā tath” ânye,
 saumukhyatas tu śriyam asya ke cid,
 vaipulyam āśamṣiṣur āyuṣaś ca.

nīhsṛtya kubjāś ca mahā|kulebhyo
 vyūhāś ca Kairātaka|vāmanānām
 nāryah krśebhyaś ca niveśanebhyo
 dev'|ānuyāna|dhvajavat praṇemuḥ.

Then, the king, his eyes filled with tears,
sniffed his son's head, looked at him long;*
although with the word "Go!"

he gave the command,
in his mind out of love
he did not let him go.

Then, he got into a golden carriage
drawn by four trained horses with gold trappings,
and driven by a manly charioteer,
a man both trustworthy and skilled.

Then, along that road carpeted with bright flowers,
with hanging garlands and waving banners,
he advanced surrounded by an apt retinue,
like the moon along the sky surrounded by stars.

He pressed slowly along that royal road,
as citizens from all sides gaped at him,
a road strewn with eyes like blue lotus halves,
eyes open wide with curiosity.

3.10

Some praised him for his gentleness,
others adored him for his majesty,
some, on account of his benignity,
wished him long life and sovereignty.

Humpbacks emerging from the great mansions,
thongs also of dwarfs and Kairátkas,*
and women emerging from low-class homes,
bowed down like flags carried behind a god.*

tataḥ «kumāraḥ khalu gacchat’ iti»
 śrutvā striyah preṣyajanāt pravṛttim
 didṛkṣayā harmya|talāni jagmur
 janena mānyena kṛt’|âbhyanujñāḥ—

tāḥ srasta|kañcī|guṇa|vighnitāś ca
 supta|prabuddh’|ākulā|locanāś ca
 vṛtt’|ânta|vinyasta|vibhūṣaṇāś ca
 kautūhalen’ â|nibhṛtāḥ pariyuḥ;

3.15 prāsāda|sopāna|tala|praṇādaiḥ
 kāñcī|ravair nūpura|nisvanaiś ca
 vitrāsayantyo gṛha|paksi|saṅghān
 anyo’nya|vegāṁś ca samākṣipantyah;

kāsām̄ cid āsām̄ tu var’|âṅganānām̄
 jāta|tvarānām̄ api s’|ōtsukānām̄
 gatim̄ gurutvāj jagṛhur viśālāḥ
 śronī|rathāḥ pīna|payo|dharāś ca;

śīghram̄ samarth” āpi tu gantum anyā
 gatim̄ nijagrāha yayau na tūrṇam̄
 hriy” â|pragalbhā vinigūhamānā
 rahaḥ|prayuktāni vibhūṣaṇāni;

paras|par’|ōtpīḍana|piṇḍitānām̄
 saṁmarda|saṁkṣobhita|kuṇḍalānām̄
 tāsām̄ tadā sa|svana|bhūṣaṇānām̄
 vāt’|āyaneś a|praśamo babhūva;

"Look, the prince is going out!"

Hearing this news from their servants,
getting their elders' permission,
the ladies, yearning for his sight,
then climbed up to the upper floors—

they gathered curious and unabashed,
hampered by the slipping of girdle strings,
eyes dazed by the sudden rousing from sleep,
ornaments slipped on at hearing the news;

frightening away the bevies of house-birds
with the clatter of steps on the stairways,
with girdles jingling and anklets tinkling,
and rebuking each other for their haste;

3.15

some of these fine women, though making haste
in their eagerness, yet were being held back
by the weight of their chariot-sized hips,
as also by their full and ample breasts;

but another, though able to move quick,
checked her steps and did not go very fast,
timid out of shame and covering up
the ornaments worn for intimacy;

commotion then reigned in those balconies,
as they thronged pressing against each other,
ornaments on their bodies jingling loud,
their earrings aflutter by the jostling;

vāt' | āyanebhyaḥ tu viniḥṣṭāni
 paras | par' | āyāsita | kuṇḍalāni
 strīnām virejur mukha | pañkajāni
 saktāni harmyeś iva pañka | jāni;

3.20 tato vimānair yuvatī | karālaiḥ
 kautūhal' | ôdghāṭita | vātayānaiḥ
 śrīmat samantān nagaram babbhāse
 viyad vimānair iva s' | âpsarobhiḥ;

vāt' | āyanānām a | viśāla | bhāvād
 anyo | nyā | gaṇḍ' | ārpita | kuṇḍalānām
 mukhāni rejuḥ pramad" | ôttamānām
 baddhāḥ kalāpā iva pañka | jānām.

taṁ tāḥ kumāraṁ pathi vīkṣamāṇāḥ
 striyo babhur gām iva gantu | kāmāḥ
 ūrdhv' | ônmukhāś c' āinam udikṣamāṇā
 narā babhur dyām iva gantu | kāmāḥ.

dṛṣṭvā ca taṁ rāja | sutam̄ striyas tā
 jājvalyamānaṁ vapusā śriyā ca
 «dhany” āsyā bhāry” ēti» śanair avocañ
 suddhair manobhiḥ khalu, n' ânya | bhāvāt.

«ayam̄ kila vyāyata | pīna | bāhū
 rūpeṇa s' | āksād iva Puṣpaketuh
 tyaktvā śriyam̄ dharmam upaiṣyat' īti»
 tasmin hi tā gauravam eva cakruḥ.

and as they stretched out from the balconies,
 their earrings rubbing against each other,
 the lotus-faces of the women bloomed,
 like lotuses hanging from the mansions;

then, with its mansions bursting with young ladies, 3.20
 throwing open the windows in their excitement,
 the city sparkled on all sides with splendor,
 like heaven with mansions filled with *apsarases*;

because those balconies were not too large,
 with earrings resting on each others' cheeks,
 the faces of those excellent girls beamed,
 like lotus bouquets tied to the windows.

As they looked down at the prince on the road,
 the women, it seemed, longed to come down to earth;
 as they looked up at him with their necks stretched,
 the men, it seemed, longed to go up to heaven.

Seeing that prince so resplendent
 with beauty and sovereign splendor,
 "Blessed is his wife!" those women murmured,
 with pure hearts, and for no other reason.

"This man with long and stout arms,
 we have heard indeed,
 in beauty like the flower-bannered god in person,*
 Will give up sovereign power and follow
 the dharma;"

for that reason they showed him their respect.

3.25 kīrṇam tathā rāja|patham kumārah
 paurair vinītaiḥ śuci|dhīra|veśaiḥ
 tat pūrvam ālokya jaharṣa kiṁ cin
 mene punar|bhāvam iv' ātmanaś ca.

puram tu tat svargam iva prahṛṣṭam
 Śuddh'|ādhivāsāḥ samavekṣya devāḥ
 jīrṇam naram nirmamire prayātum
 saṁcodan'|ārtham kṣitip'|ātmajasya.

tataḥ kumāro jaray" ābhībhūtam
 dr̄ṣṭvā narebhyah pṛthaglākṛtim tam
 uvāca saṁgrāhakam āgat'|āsthas
 tatr' āiva niṣkampa|niviṣṭa|dr̄ṣṭih:

«ka eṣa, bhoḥ sūta, naro 'bhyupetaḥ
 keśaiḥ sitair yaṣṭi|viṣakta|hastāḥ
 bhrū|saṁvṛt'|ākṣah śithil'|ānat'|āṅgah?
 kiṁ vikriy" āiṣā, prakṛtir, yad|rcchā?»

ity evam uktaḥ sa ratha|praṇetā
 nivedayām āsa nr̄p'|ātmajāya
 saṁrakṣyam apy artham a|doṣa|darśī
 tair eva devaiḥ kṛta|buddhi|mohah:

Seeing for the first time the royal highway,
so crowded with respectful citizens,
dressed in clean and dignified clothes,
the prince rejoiced somewhat and thought
he was in some way born again.

3.25

But seeing that city as joyous as paradise,
gods residing in the pure realm*
created an old man in order to induce
the son of the king to go forth.*

Then, the prince saw that man overcome by old age,
with a form so different from any other man;
full of concern, he said to his driver, his gaze
unwavering directed solely on that man:

“Who is this man, dear charioteer,
hair white, and hand clasping a walking stick,
brows hiding the eyes, body slumped and bent?
Is it a transformation?
Is it his natural state?
Or is it simply chance?”

When he was addressed in this manner,
the driver revealed to the king’s son
a matter he should have kept concealed,
without seeing his blunder because
his mind was confused by those same gods:

3.30 «rūpasya hantrī, vyasanam̄ balasya,
śokasya yonir, nidhanam̄ ratinām,
nāśah smṛtinām̄, ripur indriyāṇām—
eṣā jarā nāma yay” āiṣa bhagnah.

pītam̄ hy anen’ āpi payah śisutve,
kālena bhūyah pariṣṭam urvyām,
krameṇa bhūtvā ca yuvā vapusmān
krameṇa ten’ āiva jarām upetah.»

ity evam ukte calitah sa kiṁ cid
rāj’ātmajah sūtam idam babhāṣe:
«kim eṣa doṣo bhavitā mam’ āp’ ity?»
asmai tataḥ sārathir abhyuvāca:

«āyuṣmato ’py eṣa vayah|prakarṣo
nih|saṁśayam̄ kāla|vaśena bhāvī;
evam̄ jarām rūpa|vināśayitrīm
jānāti c’ āiv’ ēcchati c’ āiva lokah.»

tataḥ sa pūrv’āśaya|śuddha|buddhir
vistīrṇa|kalp’ācita|puṇya|karmā
śrutvā jarām saṁvivije mah”|ātmā
mah”|āśaner ghoṣam iv’ ḍāntike gauḥ.

3.35 nihsvasya dīrgham̄ svaśirah prakampya
tasmiṁś ca jīrṇe viniveṣya cakṣuh
tām̄ c’ āiva dṛṣṭvā janatām̄ saḥ harṣam̄
vākyam̄ sa saṁvigna idam̄ jagāda:

“Slayer of beauty, ravager of strength,
the womb of sorrow, the end of pleasures,
Destroyer of memory, foe of sense organs—
this is called old age,
that’s what has crippled this man.

3.30

For, as a baby, even he drank milk,
and in time, further, he crawled on the ground,
In due course he became a handsome youth,
that same man in due course has reached old age.”

Taken aback somewhat when so informed,
the king’s son said this to the charioteer:

“Will this evil affect me too?”

The charioteer then said to him:

“Though you’re blessed with long life,
without a doubt,
by force of time, you too will become old;
In this manner old age destroys beauty;
people know this and still they desire it.”

Then, the noble one, his mind cleansed by past intents,
who had collected good deeds through countless ages,
hearing about old age became deeply perturbed,
like a bull hearing close by a great lightning strike.

He sighed deeply and shook his head,
he fixed his eyes on that old man,
and, seeing the people full of joy,
dejected, he uttered these words:

3.35

«evam̄ jarā hanti ca nir|viśeṣam̄
 smṛtim̄ ca rūpam̄ ca parā|kramam̄ ca;
 na c' āiva saṃvegam upaiti lokaḥ
 praty|akṣato 'p' īdr̄śam īkṣamāṇah.

evam̄ gate, sūta, nivartay' āśvān,
 śīghram̄ gṛhāṇy eva bhavān prayātu;
 udyāna|bhūmau hi kuto ratir me
 jarā|bhaye cetasi vartamāne?»

ath' ājñayā bhartr̄|sutasya tasya
 nivartayām āsa ratham̄ niyantā;
 tataḥ kumāro bhavaṇam̄ tad eva
 cint"|āveśah̄ śūnyam iva prapede.

yadā tu tatr' āiva na śarma lebhe
 «jarā jar” ēti» praparīkṣamāṇah̄
 tato nar'|ēndr̄|ānumataḥ sa bhūyah̄
 krameṇa ten' āiva bahir jagāma.

3.40 ath' āparam̄ vyādhi|parīta|deham̄
 ta eva devāḥ sasjur manusyam;
 dr̄ṣṭvā ca tam̄ sārathim ābabhāṣe
 Šauḍdhodanis tad|gata|dr̄ṣṭir eva:

«sthūl”|ōdaraḥ śvāsa|calac|charīraḥ
 srast”|āmsa|bāhuḥ kr̄ṣa|pāṇḍu|gātraḥ
 ‘amb” ēti» vācam̄ karuṇam̄ bruvāṇah̄
 param̄ samāśritya narah̄ ka eṣah?»

"Old age thus strikes down without distinction,
memory, beauty, and manly valor;
And yet people do not become distraught,
seeing such a man with their very eyes.

Such being the case, turn around the horses,
drive back to our home quickly, charioteer;
For how can I find joy in the gardens
when fear of old age occupies my mind?"

Then, on the orders of his master's son,
the driver turned the chariot around;
to that same palace that now seemed empty,
the prince, then, retreated, engrossed in thought.

But when even there he found no relief,
lost in deep reflection: "Old age! Old age!"
in due course, then, permitted by the king,
he ventured out again with that same man.

Then, those same gods fashioned another man
with a body afflicted by disease;
when the son of Shuddhódana saw him,
he inquired of his charioteer,
his gaze riveted on that man:

"His belly swollen, his body heaves as he pants;
his arms and shoulders droop,
his limbs are thin and pale;
Leaning on someone, he cries 'Mother!' piteously;
tell me, who is this man?"

tato 'bravīt sārathir asya: «saumya,
 dhātu|prakopa|prabhavaḥ pravṛddhaḥ
 rog'|ābhidhānaḥ su|mahān an|arthāḥ
 śakto 'pi yen' āīṣa kṛto '|svatantraḥ.»

ity ūcivān rāja|sutah sa bhūyas
 tam s'|ānukampo naram īkṣamāṇah:
 «asy' āiva jātaḥ pṛthag eṣa doṣah,
 sāmānyato roga|bhayaṁ prajānām?»

tato babhāṣe sa ratha|praṇetā:
 «kumāra, sādhāraṇa eṣa doṣah;
 evam hi rogaiḥ paripīḍyamāno
 ruj” āturo harṣam upaiti lokah.»

3.45 iti śrut'|ārthaḥ sa viśaṇṇa|cetāḥ
 prāvepat' āmb'|ūrmī|gataḥ śāś” īva,
 idam ca vākyam karuṇāyamānaḥ
 provāca kiṁ cin mṛdunā svareṇa:

«idam ca roga|vyasanam prajānām
 paśyamś ca viśrambham upaiti lokah;
 vistīrṇam a|jñānam, aho, narāṇām!
 hasanti ye roga|bhayaṁ a|muktāḥ!

Then, his charioteer responded:

“The great evil called sickness, much advanced,
rising, dear sir, from the clash of humors;
That is what makes this man, though once able,
now no longer self-reliant.”

Looking at that man with great compassion,
the king’s son once again asked this question:

“Is this an evil that’s specific to this man?
Or is sickness a danger common to all men?”

The charioteer then responded:

“This is an evil, prince, common to all;
for though they are by sickness thus oppressed,
And although they are tormented by pain,
people continue to enjoy themselves.”

Hearing this truth, he trembled, despondent,
like the moon shining in rippling waters;
and he said these words with deep compassion,
in a voice that was somewhat enfeebled:

3.45

“This evil of sickness striking mankind,
people notice, yet they remain content;
O how widespread the ignorance of men!
Though not freed from the danger of sickness,
yet they continue to laugh!

nivartyatām, sūta, bahih|prayāṇān
 nar'|ēndra|sadm' āiva rathah prayātu;
 śrutvā ca me roga|bhayaṁ ratibhyaḥ
 pratyāhatam saṁkucat' īva cetaḥ.»

tato nivṛttah sa nivṛtta|harṣah
 pradhyāna|yuktaḥ praviveśa veśma;
 tam dvis tathā prekṣya ca saṁnivṛttam
 paryeṣaṇam bhūmi|patiś cakāra.

śrutvā nimittam tu nivartanasya
 saṁtyaktam ātmānam anena mene;
 mārgasya śauc'|ādhikṛtāya c' āiva
 cukrośa ruṣṭo 'pi ca n' ḍogra|daṇḍah.

3.50 bhūyaś ca tasmai vidadhe sutāya
 viśeṣa|yuktam viṣaya|pracāram
 «cal'|ēndriyatvād api nāma sakto
 n' āsmān vijahyād» iti nāthamānah.

yadā ca śabd'|ādibhir indriy'|ārthair
 antah|pure n' āiva suto 'syā reme,
 tato bahir vyādiśati sma yātrām
 «ras'|āntaram syād» iti manyamānah.

snehāc ca bhāvam tanayasya buddhvā
 sa rāga|doṣān a|vicintya kāṁś cit
 yogyāḥ samājñāpayati sma tatra
 kalāsv abhijñā iti vāra|mukhyāḥ.

Turn back, charioteer, from our excursion,
 drive the carriage back to the king's palace;
 Learning the danger of sickness, my mind
 is repelled by pleasures
 and seems, as if, to recoil."

Then, his joy disappeared and he returned
 and entered his dwelling, brooding deeply;
 seeing him return twice in this fashion,
 the king proceeded to make inquiries.

When he heard the reason for his return,
 he felt forsaken by him already;
 he raged at the man in charge of clearing the road,
 but, though angry, he imposed no harsh punishment.

And once again he arranged for his son
 the most exquisite of sensual delights,
 with the hope that,

3.50

"Perhaps, when his senses are excited,
 He'll become attached and not forsake us."

But when within the seraglio his son found
 no delight in sounds and other objects of sense,
 he then ordered another excursion outdoors,
 thinking that it might produce a different affect.

Out of love, knowing his son's state of mind,
 disregarding any evils of lust,
 he assigned to it skillful courtesans,
 known to be accomplished in the fine arts.

tato viśeṣeṇa nar' | ēndra|mārge
 sv|alamkṛte c' āiva parīkṣite ca
 vyatyasya sūtaṁ ca ratham ca rājā
 prasthāpayām āsa bahiḥ kumāram.

tatas tathā gacchati rāja|putre
 tair eva devair vihito gat'|âsuḥ;
 taṁ c' āiva mārge mṛtam uhyamānam
 sūtaḥ kumāraś ca dadarśa, n' ânyah.

3.55 ath' ābravīd rāja|sutaḥ sa sūtaṁ:
 «naraiś caturbhīr hriyate ka eṣaḥ
 dinair manuṣyair anugamyamāno
 [vi]bhūṣitaś c' āpy avarudyate ca?»

tataḥ sa śuddh' | ātmabhir eva devaiḥ
 Śuddh' | ādhivāsair abhibhūta|cetāḥ
 a|vācyam apy artham imam niyantā
 pravyājahār' ārthavad iśvarāya:

«buddh' | īndriya|prāṇa|guṇair viyuktah
 supto vi|saṃjñas tr̥ṇa|kāṣṭha|bhūtaḥ
 saṃvardhya saṃrakṣya ca yatnavadbhiḥ
 priya|priyais tyajyata eṣa ko 'pi.»

iti praṇetuḥ sa niśamya vākyam
 saṃcuksubhe kiṁ cid uvāca c' āinam:
 «kiṁ kevalo 'sy' āiva janasya dharmah,
 sarva|prajānām ayam īdr̥śo 'ntaḥ?»

Then, he had the royal road inspected
and festooned superbly with special care;
he changed the driver and the chariot,
and sent the prince off on his trip outdoors.

Then, as the prince was traveling in this way,
those very gods contrived a lifeless man;
only the prince and driver, none other,
saw the dead man being carried on the road.

Then, the king's son said to the charioteer:

3.55

"Who is this man being carried by four men
and followed by people who are downcast?
He is well adorned, yet they weep for him?"

Then, the driver, whose mind was bewildered
by those same pure deities of the pure realm,
explained the matter frankly to his lord,
a matter that he should have kept concealed.

"Lying here unconscious, like straw or a log,
bereft of mind, sense, breath, or qualities,
This is someone his dearest ones discard,
though they nurtured and guarded him
with care."

When he heard these words of the charioteer,
he was shaken a bit and said to him:

"Is this dharma peculiar to this man?
Or is such the end that awaits all men?"

tataḥ praṇetā vadati sma tasmai:
 «sarva|prajānām idam anta|karma;
 hīnasya madhyasya mah”|ātmano vā
 sarvasya loke niyato vināśah.»

- 3.60 tataḥ sa dhīro ’pi nar’|ēndra|sūnuḥ
 śrutv” āiva mṛtyum viṣasāda sadyah;
 amṣena samślisya ca kūbar’|āgram
 provāca nihrādavatā svareṇa:
 «iyam ca niṣṭhā niyatā prajānām,
 pramādyati tyakta|bhayaś ca lokah.
 manāṁsi śaṅke kaṭhināni nṛṇām
 sva|sthās tathā hy adhvani vartamānāḥ.

tasmād rathaḥ, sūta, nivartyatām no,
 vihāra|bhūmer na hi deśa|kālah;
 jānan vināśam katham ārti|kāle
 sa|cetanāḥ syād iha hi pramattaḥ.»

iti bruvāne ’pi nar’|ādhip’|ātmaje
 nivartayām āsa sa n’ āiva tam ratham;
 višeṣa|yuktam tu nar’|ēndra|śāsanāt
 sa Padma|ṣaṇḍam vanam eva niryayau.

tataḥ śivam kusumita|bāla|pādapam
 paribhramat|pramudita|matta|kokilam
 vimānavat sa kamala|cāru|dīrghikam
 dadarśa tad vanam iva Nandanam vanam.

Then, the charioteer said to him:

“This is the final act of every man;
whether one is low, middling, or noble,
In this world for all men death is certain.”

Then, the king’s son, as he learned about death,
although steadfast, soon became despondent;
leaning his shoulder against the railing,
he said in a voice that was resonant:

“This is the inevitable end of all men;
yet the world rashly revels,* casting fears aside;
The hearts of men, I suspect, must indeed be hard,
that they journey along this road so unperturbed.

Let us turn back our carriage, therefore, charioteer;
for this is not the time or place for pleasure groves;
For, perceiving death, how can a sensible* man,
keep on reveling* here rashly at a time of pain.”

Though he was so ordered by the son of the king,
yet he did not turn the chariot around; instead
to the specially prepared Padma-shanda park
he drove directly, on the orders of the king.

Then, with young trees in full bloom
and with cuckoo birds
flying around excited and intoxicated,
with pavilions and ponds lovely with lotuses,
he saw that park resembling the Nándana park.

3.60

3.65 var'āṅganā|gaṇa|kalilam nṛp'|ātmajas
tato balād vanam atinīyate sma tat
var'āpsaro|vṛtam Alak"|ādhip'|ālayam
nava|vrato munir iva vighna|kātarah.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye Saṁveg'|ōtpattir nāma
trīyah sargah.

Then, the king's son was led into that park by force, 3.65
a park that was crowded with throngs of lovely girls,
like a novice hermit fearful of obstacles
led by force to the palace of Álaka's king,
a palace crowded with lovely *ápsarases*.

Thus ends the third canto named "Becoming Dejected"
of the great poem "Life of the Buddha."



CANTO 4
REBUFFING THE WOMEN

4.1 T^{ATAS TASMĀT} pur' | ôdyānāt
 kautūhala|cal'|êkṣaṇāḥ
pratyujjagmur nṛpa|sutam
prāptam varam iva striyah.

abhigamya ca tās tasmai
vismay' | ôtpulla|locanāḥ
cakrire samudācāram
padma|kośa|nibhaiḥ karaiḥ.

tasthuś ca parivāry' āinam
manmath' | ākṣipta|cetasah
niścalaiḥ prīti|vikacaiḥ
pibanty iva locanaiḥ.

tam hi tā menire nāryah:
«Kāmo vigrahavān» iti
śobhitam lakṣaṇair diptaiḥ
saha|jair bhūṣaṇair iva.

4.5 saumyatvāc c' āiva dhairyāc ca
 kāś cid enam prarajñire:
«avatīrṇo mahīm sāksād
gūḍh' | āṁśus Candramā iti.»

tasya tā vapuś” ākṣiptā
nigṛhītam jajṛmbhire
anyo|nyam dr̥ṣṭibhir hatvā
śanaiś ca viniśaśvasuh.

THEN, WOMEN from that city park
went out to receive the king's son,
their eyes darting in excitement,
as if going to receive
an approaching bridegroom.

When the women came up to him,
their eyes open wide in wonder,
they greeted him with due respect,
their hands folded like lotus buds.

And they stood there surrounding him,
minds surrendered to the god of love,
drinking him, as if, with their eyes,
unblinking, open wide with joy.

For those women imagined him to be
Kama, god of love, in bodily form;
for he was resplendent with brilliant marks,
as if with adornments that were inborn.

Because he was both so gentle and firm,*
some of those women came to this surmise:

“He is Moon himself in a bodily form,
Come down to earth here with his beams
concealed.”

Smitten by his beauty,
they gaped, trying to hold back;
striking each other with
glances, they softly sighed.

evam tā dṛṣṭi|mātreṇa
 nāryo dadṛṣur eva tam;
 na vyājahrur na jahasuh
 prabhāven' āsyā yantritāḥ.

tās tathā tu nirārambhā
 dṛṣṭvā praṇaya|viklavāḥ
 purohita|suto dhīmān
 Udāyī vākyam abravīt:
 «sarvāḥ sarva|kalā|jñāḥ stha
 bhāva|grahaṇa|paṇḍitāḥ
 rūpa|cāturya|saṃpannāḥ
 sva|guṇair mukhyatām gatāḥ.

4.10 śobhayeta guṇair ebbhir
 api tān uttarān Kurūn
 Kuberasy' āpi c' ākrīḍām
 prāg eva vasu|dhām imām.

śaktāś cālayitum yūyam
 vīta|rāgān ṛṣīn api
 apsarobhiś ca kalitāṇ
 grahitum vibudhān api.

bhāva|jñānena hāvena
 rūpa|cāturya|saṃpadā
 strīnām eva ca śaktāḥ stha
 samṛāge, kiṁ punar nṛṇām?

Thus those women did nothing else,
but look at him with just their eyes;
they did not speak, they did not laugh,
so captivated by his might.

Wise Udáyin, the chaplain's son,
seeing them this way so paralyzed,
timid in their display of love,*
spoke, however, to those women:

"You are all skilled in all fine arts,
experts at capturing the heart;
You are all lovely and artful,
your qualities make you excel.

With these qualities you'd adorn
even the Kurus of the north,*
Even Kubéra's pleasure grove!
How much more then this lowly earth?

4.10

And you are able to arouse
even seers who are freed of lust;
You can capture even the gods,
who are charmed by *ápsarases*.

With your flirtatious dalliance,
with your knowledge of emotions,
the wealth of your beauty and charm,
You can even excite passion
in women, how much more in men?

tāsām evam|vidhānām vo
 niyuktānām sva|gocare
 iyam evam|vidhā ceṣṭā
 na tuṣṭo 'smy ārjavena vah.

idam nava|vadhūnām vo
 hrī|nikuñcita|cakṣuṣām
 sa|drśām ceṣṭitām hi syād,
 api vā gopa|yoṣitām!

4.15 yad api syād ayam dhīraḥ
 śrī|prabhāvān mahān iti*
 strīnām api mahat teja
 iti* kāryo 'tra niścayah.

purā hi Kāśisundaryā
 veśa|vadhvā mahān ṛṣih
 taḍito 'bhūt padā Vyāso
 dur|dharsō devatair api.

Manthāla|Gautamo bhikṣur
 Jaṅghayā vāra|mukhyayā
 pipriṣuś ca tad|arth'|ārthām
 vyasūn niraharat purā.

Gautamām Dīrghatapasām
 maha”|ṛṣim dīrgha|jīvinam
 yoṣit samtosayām āsa
 varṇa|sthān’|āvaraṇ satī.

When you are like that, appointed
 each to your own specific task,*
 Yet you conduct yourselves like this!
 Your artlessness pleases me not.

For the way you conduct yourself
 is only proper for new brides,
 Who blushingly avert their eyes,
 or else for the wives of cowherds!

Though he may be steadfast and great,
 by the power of his majesty,
 Yet women's verve is also great!
 So should you conclude in this case.*

4.15

Long ago Kashi-súndari,
 the prostitute, kicked with her foot
 Vyasa, the great seer, whom even
 the gods found it hard to assail.*

Once when Manthála Gáutama
 lusted after Jangha,
 the lovely courtesan,
 He carried bodies of dead men,
 desiring to please her with wealth.*

And Gáutama Dirgha-tapas,
 the great seer, advanced in age,
 Was pleased by a young woman,
 though she was low in rank and caste.*

Rṣyaśrīṇgam muniṣutam
 tath” āiva strīṣv alpaṇḍitam
 upāyair vividhaiḥ Śāntā
 jagrāha ca jahāra ca.

- 4.20 Viśvāmitro maha”|ṛṣiś ca
 vigadho ’pi mahat tapaḥ
 daśa varṣāṇy ahar mene
 Ghṛtācy” āpsarasā hṛtaḥ.
 evam|ādīn ṛṣīm̄s tām̄s tān
 anayan vikriyām̄ striyah;
 lalitam̄ pūrvavayasam̄
 kiṁ punar nr̄|pateḥ sutam?
 tad evam̄ sati viśrabdhām̄
 prayatadhvam̄ tathā yathā
 iyam̄ nr̄pasya vam̄śā|śrī
 ito na syāt parāṇ|mukhī.
 yā hi kāś cid yuvatayo
 haranti sa|dr̄śam̄ janam;
 nikṛṣṭ’|ōtkṛṣṭayor bhāvam̄
 yā gṛhṇanti tu, tāḥ striyah..»
 ity Udāyi|vacah śrutvā
 tā viddhā iva yoṣitah
 samāruruhur ātmānam̄
 kumāra|grahaṇam̄ prati.

Rishya-shringa, son of a sage,
 with no experience of women,
 Was likewise entrapped and dragged off
 by Shanta with manifold wiles.*

To Vishva-mitra, the great seer,
 seeped in potent austerities,
 Ten years seemed a day under the
 spell of *āpsaras* Ghritáchi.*

4.20

Women have caused the arousal
 of various seers such as these;
 How much more then the king's son here,
 gentle, in the flower of his youth?

Such being the case you should, therefore,
 strive boldly in such a way that
 This royal heir of the king's line
 not turn his face away from here.

For any girl can captivate
 the hearts of men of equal class;
 But true women capture the love
 of both the high-born and the low.”

And when they heard these words of Udáyin,
 those women were, as if, cut to the quick;
 with determination they set their minds,
 on captivating the prince.

4.25 tā bhrūbhīḥ prekṣitair hāvair
 hasitair lañitair gataiḥ
 cakrur ākṣepikāś ceṣṭā
 bhīta|bhītā iv' āṅganāḥ.

rājñas tu viniyogena
 kumārasya ca mārdavāt
 jahuḥ kṣipram a|viśrambham
 madena madanena ca.

atha nārī|jana|vṛtaḥ
 kumāro vyacarad vanam
 vāsitā|yūtha|sahitaḥ
 kar" īva Himavad|vanam.

sa tasmin kānane ramye
 jajvāla strī|puraḥsaraḥ
 ākrīda iva Vibhrāje
 Vivasvān apsaro|vṛtaḥ—

maden' āvarjitā nāma
 tam kāś cit tatra yoṣitāḥ
 kañchinaiḥ pasprśuḥ pīnaiḥ
 saṁhatair valgubhiḥ stanaiḥ;

4.30 srast'|āṁsa|komal'|ālamba|
 mṛdu|bāhu|lat" ābalā
 an|ṛtam skhalitam kā cit
 kṛtv" āinam sasvaje balāt;

Somewhat timidly, then, those damsels
made gestures aimed at arousing love;
with eyebrows, glances, and flirtations,
and with laughter, frolicking, and gait.

4.25

But on account of the king's command,
and the gentle nature of the prince,
they quickly dropped their timidity,
under the spell of liquor and love.

Surrounded, then, by those women,
the prince strolled about in the grove,
like an elephant with a female herd,
in a Himalayan grove.

In that lovely grove he sparkled,
escorted by the women folk,
like Vivásvat surrounded by *āpsarases*,*
in the Vibhrája pleasure grove—

Some of the women who were there,
under the pretense of being drunk,
touched him with their firm and full breasts,
that were charming and closely set.

One of the girls feigned to stumble,
and with tender tendril-like arms,
hanging loosely from her drooping
shoulders, embraced him by force.

4.30

kā cit tāmr'|ādhar'|oṣṭhena
 mukhen' āsava|gandhinā
 viniśāsvāsa karṇe 'sya:
 «rahasyam śrūyatām» iti;

kā cid ajñāpayant” īva
 provāc' ārdr'|ānulepanā:
 «iha bhaktim kuruṣv' ēti»
 hasta|samśleṣa|lipsayā;

muhur muhur mada|vyāja|
 srasta|nīl'|āmśuk” āparā
 ālakaṣya|raśanā reje
 sphurad|vidyud iva kṣapā;

kāś cit kanaka|kāñcībhir
 mukharābhir itas tataḥ
 babhramur darśayantyo 'sya
 śroṇīs tanv|amśuk'|āvṛtāḥ;

4.35 cūta|śākhām kusumitām
 pragṛhy' ānyā lalambire
 su|varṇa|kalaśa|prakhyān
 darśayantyah payo|dharān;

kā cit padma|vanād etya
 sa|padmā padma|locanā
 padma|vaktrasya pārśve 'sya
 Padmaśrīr iva tasthuśī;

One girl whispered in his ear,
her mouth smelling of liquor,
her lower lip coppery red:

“Listen to a secret!”

One girl, still wet with unguents,
said, as if she were commanding:

“Make a line here!”*

longing to be touched by his hand.

Another, pretending that she was drunk,
repeatedly let her blue dress slip down.
Flashing her girdle, she gleamed,
like the night with lightning streaks.

Some rambled hither and thither,
with their golden girdles tinkling,
displaying to him their hips,
covered with fine see-through cloth.

Others, grasping branches
of mango in full bloom,
bent down to expose breasts
resembling golden pots.

4.35

Another lotus-eyed girl came out
with a lotus from the lotus-grove,
and stood next to the lotus-faced prince,
like Padma-shri, the Lotus-Fortune.*

madhuram gītam anv|artham
 kā cit s'âbhinayam jagau
 tam sva|sthām codayant” īva
 «vañcito 's' īty» avekṣitaiḥ;

śubhena vadanen' ânyā
 bhrū|kārmuka|vikarṣiṇā
 prāvṛty' ânucakār' âsyā
 ceṣṭitam dhīra|lilayā;

pīna|valgu|stanī kā cid
 ghās'|āghūrnita|kuṇḍalā
 uccair avajahās' âinam:
 «sa m” āpnotu bhavān» iti;*

4.40 apayāntam tath” âiv' ânyā
 babandhur mālya|dāmabhiḥ,
 kāś cit s'ākṣepa|madhurair
 jagṛhur vacan'|âṅkuśaiḥ;

pratiyog'ârthinī kā cid
 gṛhitvā cūta|vallarīm
 «idam puṣpam tu kasy' ēti»
 papraccha mada|viklavā;

kā cit puruṣavat kṛtvā
 gatim samsthānam eva ca
 uvāc' âinam: «jitaḥ strībhir!
 jaya, bho, pṛthivīm imām!»

Another girl sang a sweet song,
with gestures that brought out its sense,
as if prodding the composed prince
with glances that appeared to say:

“You are cheating yourself!”

Another parodied his bearing
by stretching the bow of her brows
upon her beautiful countenance,
mimicking his resolute mien.

One girl with full and charming breasts,
her earrings shaking with her laugh,
made fun of him loudly, saying:

“Catch me, sir!”*

As he was running off, likewise,
others bound him with garland chains,
some restrained him with goads of words,
sweetened with seductive hints.

4.40

One girl, wanting to start a fight,
grabbed a branch of a mango tree
and inquired, her speech slurred by drink:

“Whose flower is this?”

One girl, mimicking the gait
and the bearing of a man,
said to him:

“Women have conquered you!
Now, sir, conquer this earth!”

atha lol'|ēkṣaṇā kā cij
 jīgrantī nīlam utpalam
 kiṁ|ciṇ|mada|kalair vākyair
 nr̥p'|ātmajam abhāṣata:

«paśya, bhartaś, citam cūtam
 kusumair madhu|gandhibhiḥ
 hema|pañjara|ruddho vā
 kokilo yatra kūjati.

4.45 aśoko dṛṣyatām eṣa
 kāmi|śoka|vivardhanaḥ,
 ruvantī bhramarā yatra
 dahyamānā iv' āgninā.

cūta|yaṣṭyā samāśliṣṭo
 dṛṣyatām tilaka|drumah,
 śukla|vāsā iva narah
 striyā pīt'|āṅga|rāgaya.

phullam kurubakam paśya
 nirbhukt'|ālaktaka|prabhām,
 yo nakha|prabhayā strīṇām
 nirbhartsita iv' ānataḥ.

bāl'|āśokaś ca nicito
 dṛṣyatām eṣa pallavaiḥ,
 yo 'smākam hasta|śobhābhīr
 lajjamāna iva sthitah.

Then, one girl, her eyes rolling,
smelling a blue lotus bloom,
spoke to the king's son with words
that were somewhat slurred by drink:

"Look, Lord, at this mango tree,
full of honey-scented blooms;
A cuckoo cries there, as if
locked up in a golden cage.*

Look at this *ashóka* tree,
increasing a lover's grief;
Bees are buzzing there, as if
by a fire they are being scorched.*

4.45

Look at this *tilaka* tree
embraced by a mango branch,
Like a man dressed in white clothes
being embraced by a woman
with her body painted gold.*

Look at this *kúrubaka* tree in bloom,
shining like lac that has been just squeezed out,
Bent low, as if it has been put to shame,
by the brilliance of the women's nails.*

Look at this *ashóka* tree,
young and covered with young shoots,
That appears to stand abashed,
at the dazzle of our hands.*

dīrghikām prāvṛtām paśya
 tīraljaiḥ sinduvārakaiḥ
 pāṇḍur' |āṁśuka|saṁvītām
 śayānām pramadām iva.

4.50 dr̥syatām strīsu māh" |ātmyam
 cakravāko hy asau jale
 pr̥sthataḥ presyavad bhāryām
 anuvarty anugacchati.

mattasya para|puṣṭasya
 ruvataḥ śrūyatām dhvaniḥ
 a|paraḥ kokilo 'nvaksam
 pratiśrutk" ēva kūjati.

api nāma vihañ|gānām
 vasanten' āhṛto madaḥ
 na tu cintayato '|cintyam
 janasya prājñā|māninaḥ.»

ity evam tā yuvatayo
 manmath'|ōddāma|cetasah
 kumāram vividhais tais tair
 upacakramire nayaih.

evam ākṣipyamāṇo 'pi
 sa tu dhairy'|āvṛt'|ēndriyah
 «martavyam» iti s'|ōdvego
 na jaharṣa na vivyathe.

Look at this pond surrounded by
sindu-várakas on its banks,
 Like a young woman lying down,
 decked out in her silky white clothes.*

Look at the greatness of women!
 That *chakra-vaka* in the lake
 Obediently follows its wife,
 trailing behind her like a slave.

4.50

Listen to the sound of the cuckoo
 maddened by passion, as it cries out;
 At once like an echo,
 another cuckoo coos.

How could it be that spring has brought
 the passion of love to the birds;
 Not to this man who thinks he's wise,
 thinking what is beyond all thought?"*

In this manner those young girls,
 their minds elated by love,
 assailed the prince with intrigues
 of many and diverse kinds.

Although seduced in this way,
 he wavered not, nor rejoiced,
 firmly guarding his senses,
 and perturbed at the thought:

"One must die."*

4.55 tāsām tattve 'n|avasthānam
 dr̄ṣṭvā sa puruṣ'|ōttamaḥ
 samam vignena dhīreṇa
 cintayāmāsa cetasā:

«kim v imā n' āvagacchanti
 capalam yauvanam striyah
 yato rūpeṇa saṃmattam
 jarā yan nāśayiṣyati?

nūnam etā na paśyanti
 kasya cid roga|samplavam;
 tathā hr̄ṣṭā bhayaṁ tyaktvā
 jagati vyādhī|dharmaṇi.

an|abhijñāś ca su|vyaktaṁ
 mṛtyoh sarv'|âpahāriṇāḥ;
 tataḥ sva|sthā nir|udvignāḥ
 krīḍanti ca hasanti ca.

jarām vyādhim ca mṛtyum ca
 ko hi jānan sa|cetanaḥ
 sva|sthas tiṣṭhen niṣīded vā
 śayed vā kim punar haset?

4.60 yas tu dr̄ṣṭvā param jīrṇam
 vyādhitam mṛtam eva ca
 sva|stho bhavati n' ôdvigno
 yath" â|cetās tath" âiva saḥ.

When he saw that those women
had no firm grasp of the truth,
his mind both perturbed and firm,
that supreme man pondered thus:

"Do these women not understand
the transient nature of youth,
That they are drunk with their beauty,
which old age will surely destroy?

Surely they have never seen
a man by sickness oppressed,
That, without fear, they rejoice thus,
in this world subject to disease.

Quite clearly they are ignorant
of death that snatches away all;
Therefore, they have fun and they laugh,
at total ease and unperturbed.

For what sensible man who knows*
about old age, sickness, and death,
Would stand, sit, or lie down at ease?
How much less would he laugh, indeed?

But when a man happens to see
someone who is old, sick, or dead,
And remains at ease, unperturbed,
he's the same as a senseless man.*

viyuṣyamāne hi tarau
 puṣpair api phalair api
 patati chidyamāne vā
 tarur anyo na śocate.»

iti dhyāna|param dṛṣṭvā
 viṣayebhyo gata|spṛham
 Uḍāyī nīti|śāstra|jñānas
 tam uvāca su|hṛttayā:

«aham nr|patinā dattah
 sakhā tubhyam kṣamaḥ kila
 yasmāt, tvayi vivakṣā me
 tayā paṇayavattayā.

a|hitāt pratiṣedhaś ca
 hite c' ânupravartanam
 vyasane c' ā|parityāgas—
 tri|vidham mitra|lakṣaṇam.

4.65 so 'ham maitrīm pratijñāya
 puruṣ'ârthāt parāṇ|mukham*
 yadi tvā samupekṣeya,
 na bhaven mitratā mayi.

tad bravīmi suhṛd bhūtvā
 taruṇasya vapuṣmataḥ:
 idam na pratirūpam te
 strīṣv a|dākṣiṇyam īdr̥sam.

For when one tree is stripped
of its flowers or fruits;
Or when it's cut down or falls,
another tree does not grieve."

Seeing him in this way absorbed in deep thought,
without desire for any sensual things,
that expert in the science of polity,
Udáyin, out of friendship said to him:

"The king assigned me as your friend,
thinking I was up to the task;
Therefore, I want to speak to you,
because he placed his trust in me.

To curb him from what's undesirable,
to press him to do what's desirable,
Not to desert him in difficult times—
these, indeed, are the three marks of a friend.

After I have pledged my friendship to you,
should I be disinterested in you,
Who have turned your back on the goals of man,*
there would, indeed, be no friendship in me.

So, I speak as a friend of yours,
you who are so handsome and young;
This lack of courtesy to women;
it is unbecoming of you.

4.65

anṛten' āpi nārīṇāṁ
 yuktāṁ samanuvartanam
 tad|vrīḍā|parihār'|ārtham
 ātma|raty|artham eva ca.

sāmnatiś c' ānuvṛttiś ca
 strīṇāṁ hr̥daya|bandhanam;
 snehasya hi gunā yonir
 māna|kāmāś ca yoṣitah.

tad arhasi, viśāl'|ākṣa,
 hr̥daye 'pi parān|mukhe
 rūpasy' āsy' ānurūpeṇa
 dākṣiṇyen' ānuvartitum.

4.70 dākṣiṇyam auṣadhaṁ strīṇāṁ,
 dākṣiṇyam bhūṣaṇam param;
 dākṣiṇya|rahitaṁ rūpam
 niṣ|puṣpam iva kānanam.

kim vā dākṣiṇya|mātreṇa?
 bhāven' āstu parigrahaḥ.
 viṣayān dur|labhāḥ labdhvā
 na hy avajñātum arhasi.

«kāmām param» iti jñātvā
 devo 'pi hi Puram̄daraḥ
 Gautamasya muneh patnīm
 Ahalyām cakame purā.

It's fit to pander to women
 even by telling a falsehood,
 To rid them of their bashfulness,
 to gratify oneself as well.

To submit and pander to them,
 that's what binds the hearts of women;
 For virtues are the womb of love,
 and women long to be admired.

So, O large-eyed one, though your heart
 is turned away, deign to pander
 With a gallantry that befits
 the true beauty of your body.

Gallantry is the medicine
 and chief ornament for women;
 For beauty without gallantry
 is like a park without flowers.

4.70

Or what good is just gallantry?
 Embrace them with feeling that's true.
 For, finding pleasures hard to find,
 you should not treat them with contempt.*

Knowing pleasure to be the best,
 even god Indra long ago
 Made love to Ahálya,
 the sage Gáutama's wife.*

Agastyah prārthayām āsa
 soma|bhāryām ca Rohinīm
 tasmāt tat|sadṛśīm lebhe
 Lopāmudrām—iti śrutih.

Utathyasya ca bhāryāyām
 Mamatāyām mahā|tapah
 Mārutyām janayām āsa
 Bharadvājam Br̥haspatih.

4.75 Br̥has|pater mahiṣyām ca
 juhvatyām juhvatām varah
 Budham vibudha|karmāṇam
 janayām āsa Candramāh.

Kālīm c' āiva purā kanyām
 jala|prabhava|saṁbhavām
 jagāma Yamunā|tire
 jāta|rāgah Parāśarah.

Mātaṅgyām Akṣamālāyām
 garhitāyām rirāṁsayā
 Kapiñjalādām tanayām
 Vasiṣṭho 'janayan muniḥ.

Yayātiś c' āiva rāja'|ṛṣir
 vayasy api vinirgate
 Viśvācy" āpsarasā s'|ārdham
 reme Caitrarathē vane.

Agástya courted Róhini,
 the wife of the Moon,
 Therefore, he got Lopa·mudra,
 who looked just like her—
 so the scriptures say.*

And the great ascetic Brihas·pati,
 fathered Bharad·vaja
 By Mámata, the wife of Utáthya,
 daughter of Máruta.*

And Moon, the best of those who sacrifice,
 4.75
 fathered Budha, who performed godly acts,
 By the chief consort of Brihas·pati,
 as she was performing a sacrifice.*

And Paráshara, his passions inflamed,
 went long ago with virgin Kali,
 On the bank of the river Yámuna,
 Kali, who was the daughter of a fish.*

The sage Vasíshtha, overcome by lust,
 fathered a son called Kapiñjaláda,
 By Aksha·mala, the despised daughter
 of a man from the outcaste Matángas.*

And Yayáti also, the royal seer,
 even at the end of his life,
 Made love to the *ápsaras* Vishváchi,*
 within the Cháitraratha grove.

strī|samsargam vināś'|ântam
 Pāñdur jñātv” âpi Kauravah
 Mâdrī|rūpa|guṇ' |âkṣiptah
 siṣeve kāma|jam sukham.

4.80 Karālajanakaś c’ âiva
 hṛtvā brāhmaṇa|kanyakām
 avāpa bhrāmśam apy evam
 na tu seje na man|matham.

evam|ādyā mah”|ātmāno
 viṣayān garhitān api
 rati|hetor bubhujire
 prāg eva guṇa|saṁhitān.

tvam punar nyāyataḥ prāptān
 balavān rūpavān yuvā
 viṣayān avajānāsi
 yatra saktam idam jagat.»

iti śrutvā vacas tasya
 ślaksṇam āgama|saṁhitam
 megha|stanita|nirghoṣah
 kumāraḥ pratyabhāṣata:

«upapannam idam vākyam
 sauḥārdya|vyañjakam tvayi;
 atra ca tv” ânunesyāmi
 yatra mā duṣṭhu manyase.

Though Pandu of the Kuru line knew
 that sex indeed would lead to his death,
 Seduced by the beauty of Madri,
 he gave in to the pleasure of sex.*

And Karála-jánaka as well,
 who abducted a brahmin girl,
 Never stopped holding fast to his love,
 although he came to ruin thereby.*

4.80

Men of eminence such as these,
 to satisfy their carnal lust,
 Enjoyed pleasures even abject,
 how much more, then, excellent ones?

Yet you, youthful, handsome, and strong,
 treat pleasures with utter contempt,
 Pleasures you have rightly obtained,
 pleasures to which the whole world clings.”

When he heard this smooth speech of his,
 supported by scriptural texts,
 the prince answered back in a voice,
 like the thunder clap of a cloud:

“Your words are becoming of you,
 disclosing your friendship for me;
 But I’ll convince you point by point
 every place you have judged me wrong.

4.85 n' āvajānāmi viśayān,
 jāne lokam̄ tad|ātmakam;
 a|nityam̄ tu jagan matvā
 n' âtra me ramate manah.

jarā vyādhīś ca mṛtyuś ca
 yadi na syād idam̄ trayam
 mam' āpi hi manojñeṣu
 viśayeṣu ratir bhavet.

nityam̄ yady api hi strīñām
 etad eva vapur bhavet
 doṣavatsv api kāmeṣu
 kāmaṇam̄ rajyeta me manah.

yadā tu jarayā pītaṇ
 rūpam̄ āsāṇ bhaviṣyati,
 ātmano 'py an|abhipretam̄
 mohāt tatra ratir bhavet.

mṛtyu|vyādhī|jarā|dharmā
 mṛtyu|vyādhī|jar"ātmaḥbhiḥ
 ramamāṇo hy a|saṁvignah
 saṁāno mṛga|paksibhiḥ.

4.90 yad apy āttha «mah”|ātmānas
 te 'pi kām̄|ātmakā iti
 saṁvego 'tr' āiva kartavyo,
 yadā teṣām̄ api kṣayah.

I show no contempt for pleasures of sense,
 I know that people are obsessed with them;
 But knowing that the world is transient,
 my heart finds no delight in them at all.

4.85

For if old age, sickness, and death,
 these three things were not to exist,
 I would also have found delight
 in delightful pleasures of sense.

For if women could just maintain
 these same bodies for evermore,
 My heart may well have found delight,
 even in these sinful pleasures.

But when these lovely forms of theirs
 will have been consumed by old age,
 They'll be repulsive even to themselves;
 it is delusion to delight in them.

For when a man who's subject to
 death, sickness, and old age as well,
 Dallies unperturbed with women
 gripped by death, sickness, and old age,
 he's no better than beasts or birds.

What you say about those eminent men,
 that they were also given to pleasures;
 It should indeed cause us all anxiety,
 that these men also have succumbed to death!

4.90

māh”|ātmyam na ca tan manye
 yatra sāmānyataḥ kṣayah
 viṣayēṣu prasaktir vā
 yuktir vā n’ ātmavattayā.

yad apy ātth’ *ânl̄ten’ âpi*
strījane vartyatām iti
anl̄tam n’ âvagacchāmi
dākṣīṇyen’ âpi kim cana.

na c’ ânuvartanam tan me
 rucitam yatra n’ ârjavam;
 sarva|bhāvena samparko
 yadi n’ asti, dhig astu tat.

a|dhṛteḥ śrad|dadhānasya
 saktasy’ â|doṣa|darśinah
 kim hi vañcayitavyam syāj
 jāta|rāgasya cetasaḥ.

4.95 vañcayanti ca yady evam
 jāta|rāgāḥ paras|param
 nanu n’ âiva kṣamam draṣṭum
 narāḥ strīnām nṛṇām striyah.

tad evam sati duḥkh’|ārtam
 jarā|maraṇa|bhāginam
 na mām kāmeṣv an|āryeṣu
 pratārayitum arhasi.

No true eminence exists in my view,
 where death exists as a general trait,
 Where attachment to sense objects persists,
 or where self-possession is not attained.

As to what you say that one should pander
 to women by speaking even falsehoods;
 I cannot condone anything that's false,
 even when it is linked to gallantry.

I do not relish pandering
 that's devoid of sincerity;
 I deplore sexual union
 that is without full commitment.

For is it proper to deceive someone
 who is unsteady and is full of trust,
 Who is attached and is blind to perils,
 whose mind is caught in the grip of passion?

If those in the grip of passion,
 were to deceive each other thus,
 Surely, it would not be proper,
 then, for men to look at women,
 or for women to look at men.

4.95

So, that being the case, it behooves you not
 to lure me into ignoble pleasures,
 I, who am afflicted with suffering,
 under the power of old age and death.

aho 'ti|dhīram balavac ca te manaś
 caleṣu kāmeṣu ca sāra|darśināḥ
 bhaye 'ti|tīvre viṣayesu sajjase
 nirīkṣamāṇo maraṇ'|ādhvani prajāḥ.

aham punar bhīrur at' īva viklavo
 jarā|vipad|vyādhi|bhayaṁ vicintayan
 labhe na śāntim na dhṛtim, kuto ratim,
 niśāmayan dīptam iv' āgninā jagat.

«a|saṁśayam mṛtyur» iti prajānato
 narasya rāgo hṛdi yasya jāyate,
 ayo|māyīm tasya paraimi cetanām
 mahā|bhaye rajyati yo na roditi.»

4.100 ath' o kumāraś ca viniścay'|ātmikām
 cakāra kām'|āśraya|ghātinīm kathām
 janasya cakṣur|gamanīya|maṇḍalo
 mahī|dharam c' āstam iyāya bhās|karah.

tato vṛthā|dhārita|bhūṣaṇa|srajaḥ
 kalā|guṇaiś ca prāṇayaiś ca niś|phalaiḥ
 sva eva bhāve vinigṛhya manmatham
 puram yayur bhagna|mano|rathāḥ striyah.

tataḥ pur'|ōdyāna|gatām jana|śriyam
 nirīksya sāyam pratīsamhṛtām punah
 a|nityatām sarval|gatām vicintayan
 viveśa dhiṣṇyam kṣiti|pālak'|ātmajah.

O how steady and strong your mind must be
 that you see substance in fleeting pleasures,
 That, seeing these creatures on the path of death,
 you are attached to sensual pleasures
 in the midst of the most frightful dangers.

I, however, am timid, much perturbed,
 as I think of the dangers
 of old age, sickness, and death;
 I find no peace or content, much less joy,
 seeing the world with fire as if ablaze.

When passion arises in a man's heart
 who understands the certainty of death,
 His heart, I reckon, must be made of steel,
 when in the face of such a great danger
 he makes merry and does not weep."

Then, as the prince made this resolute speech,
 that wiped out any resort to pleasure,
 the sun, upon whose orb people could gaze,
 proceeded to the mountains of the west.

4.100

Then, the women went back to the city,
 locking love within their hearts, their hopes dashed—
 vain the ornaments and garlands they wore,
 fruitless their fine arts and displays of love.*

Then, seeing the beauty of the women folk
 in the city park withdrawn at sunset,
 pondering the transience of everything,
 the ruler's son entered his dwelling place.

tataḥ śrutvā rājā
 viṣaya|vimukham tasya tu mano,
 na śīṣye tāṁ rātrīm
 hr̥daya|gata|śalyo gaja iva;
 atha śrānto mantre
 bahu|vividha|mārge sa|sacivo
 na so 'nyat kāmebhyo
 niyamanam apaśyat sutu|mateḥ.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye Strī|vighātano nāma
 caturthaḥ sargah.

Then, hearing that his son's mind was averse
to objects of sense, the king did not sleep
that night, like an elephant with a dart
buried in its heart.

Then, he toiled hard with his counsels
on the diverse paths of counsel;
but besides pleasures he did not
see another path to restrain
the mind of his son.

Thus ends the fourth canto named "Rebuffing the Women"
of the great poem "Life of the Buddha."



CANTO 5
THE DEPARTURE

SA TATHĀ VIŞAYAIR vilobhyamānah
 param'ârhair api Śākyarājaśūnuḥ
 na jagāma dhṛtiṁ na śarma lebhe,
 hṛdaye simha iv' āti|digdha|viddhah.

atha mantri|sutaiḥ kṣamaiḥ kadā cit
 sakhibhiś citra|kathaiḥ kṛt'|ānuyātrah
 vana|bhūmi|didṛkṣayā śam'|ēpsur
 nara|dev'|ānumato bahiḥ pratasthe.

nava|rūkma|khalīna|kiñkiṇīkam
 pracalac|cāmara|cāru|hema|bhāṇḍam
 abhiruhya sa Kanthakam sad|aśvam
 prayayau ketum iva drum'|ābjā|ketuh.

sa vikṛṣṭatarām van'|ānta|bhūmim
 vana|lobhāc ca yayau mahī|guṇāc ca;
 salil'|ōrmi|vikāra|sīra|mārgām
 vasu|dhām c' āiva dadarśa krṣyamāṇām.

hala|bhinna|vikīrṇa|śāspa|darbhām
 hata|sūkṣma|krimi|kīṭa|jantu|kīrṇām
 samavekṣya rasām tathā|vidhām tām
 sva|janasy' ēva vadhe bhṛśam śūsoca.

5.1
ALTHOUGH, IN this way, the Shakya king's son
was enticed with priceless objects of sense,
yet he got no content, found no relief,
like a lion shot in the heart
with a poison-tipped arrow.

Then one day, with the consent of the king,
he went outside to see the wooded groves,
along with able sons of ministers
and friends good at narrating vivid tales,
yearning to find peace.

He set out mounted on the good horse Kánthaka—
the bells hanging from its bit were made of new gold,
its gold trappings made charming with
flowing chowries—
like the glint of *drumábja* mounted on a flag.*

Love of the woods and the exquisite land
drew him deep into the distant forest;
there he saw the earth being plowed, with furrows
resembling the rippling waves on water.

Clumps of grass dug up by the plow littered the earth,
covered with tiny dead creatures, insects and worms;
as he beheld the earth with all these strewn about,
he grieved greatly, as if a kinsman had been killed.

kṛṣataḥ puruṣāṁś ca vīkṣamāṇah
 pavan’ârk’âṁśu|rājō|vibhinna|varṇān
 vahana|klama|viklavāṁś ca dhuryān
 param’āryaḥ paramāṁ kṛpām cakāra.

avatīrya tatas turaṅga|prīṣṭāc
 chanakair gām vyacarac chucā parītaḥ
 jagato janana|vyayaṁ vicinvan
 «kṛpaṇaṁ khalv idam» ity uvāca c’ ārtah.

manasā ca viviktatām abhīpsuḥ
 su|hṛdas tān anuyāyino nivārya
 abhitaś cala|cāru|parṇavatyā
 vijane mūlam upeyivān sa jambvāḥ.

niṣasāda sa yatra śaucavatyāṁ
 bhuvi vaidūrya|nikāśa|śādvalāyām
 jagataḥ prabhava|vyayau vicinvan
 manasaś ca sthiti|mārgam ālalambe.

5.10 samavāpta|manah|sthitiś ca sadyo
 viṣay’|ēcch”|ādibhir ādhibhiś ca muktaḥ
 sa|vitarka|vicāram āpa śāntam
 prathamam dhyānam an|āsrava|prakāram.

Seeing the men plowing the fields,
 their bodies discolored
 by the wind, the dust, the scorching
 rays of the sun,
 oxen wearied by the toil of pulling the plows,
 great compassion overwhelmed that great noble man.

Getting down from the horse, then, he began to pace
 slowly across that land, deeply engulfed by grief,
 reflecting on the birth and death of all creatures;
 and deeply anguished, he cried out:

“How wretched, indeed, is this world!”

Getting rid of those friends who accompanied him,
 wishing to reach some clarity in his own mind,
 he reached the foot of a rose apple tree in a
 lonely spot with charming leaves rustling all around.

On that pure ground with grass the color of beryl,
 he sat down, and as he began to contemplate
 the origin and destruction of all creatures,
 he embarked upon the path of mental stillness.

Achieving at once the state of mental stillness,
 and freedom from worries, such as sensual desire,
 he attained the first trance—
 with thought and reflection,
 tranquil, uninfluenced by the evil inflows.*

adhigamya tato viveka|jam tu
 parama|prīti|sukham manah|samādhim
 idam eva tataḥ param pradadhyan
 manasā loka|gatim niśāmya samyak:

«kr̥paṇam, bata, yaj|janah svayam sann
 a|vaśo vyādhil|jarā|vināśa|dharmā
 jaray” ārditam āturam mṛtam vā
 param aljño vijugupsate mad’|āndhah.

iha ced aham īdrśah svayam san
 vijugupseyā param tathā|svabhāvam,
 na bhavet sa|dṛśam hi tat kṣamam vā
 paramam dharmam imam vijānato me.»

iti tasya vipaśyato yathāvaj
 jagato vyādhil|jarā|vipatti|doṣān
 balalyauvana|jīvita|pravṛtto
 vijagām’ ātmagato madaḥ kṣaṇena.

5.15 na jaharṣa na c’ āpi c’ ānutepe;
 vicikitsām na yayau na tandri|nidre;
 na ca kāma|guṇeṣu saṁrarañje;
 na vididvesa param na c’ āvamene.

Thereupon, he attained absorption of the mind,
born of discernment, with the joy of supreme bliss;
knowing rightly in his mind the course of the world,
thereafter he pondered over this very thing:

“How wretched that ignorant man,
blinded by pride,
who, though himself powerless
and subject to the law
Of disease, old age, and death,
should treat with contempt*
another who’s sick, dead, or oppressed by old age!

If I, being myself like that,
should treat with contempt*
another man here with a nature just like that,
It would not befit me, and it would not be right,
I who have come to fathom
this supreme dharma.”

As he thus saw rightly the evils of the world,
the evils of disease, old age, and death,
pride of self in an instant departed from him,
pride resulting from his strength, youth, and life.

He did not give in to dejection or delight; 5.15
he did not give in to doubt, or to sloth or sleep;
he felt no attachment to sensual delights;
he did not hate others or treat them with contempt.

iti buddhir iyam ca nīrajaskā
 vavṛdhe tasya mah”ātmano viśuddhā
 puruṣair a|parair a|dṛsyamānah
 puruṣaś c’ ḫopasasarpa bhikṣu|veṣah.

nara|deva|sutas tam abhyapṛcchad:
 «vada, ko ’s’ īti?» śāśamsa so ’tha tasmai:
 «nara|pumgava, janma|mṛtyu|bhītaḥ
 śramaṇaḥ pravrajito ’smi mokṣa|hetoh.

jagati kṣaya|dharmake mumukṣur
 mṛgayे ’ham śivam a|kṣayam padam tat
 svajane ’nyaljane ca tulya|buddhir
 viṣayebhyo vinivṛtta|rāga|doṣah.

nivasan kva cid eva vṛkṣa|mūle
 vijane v” āyatane girau vane vā
 vicarāmy a|parigraho nirāśah
 param’|ārthāya yath”|ōpapanna|bhaikṣah.»

5.20 iti paśyata eva rāja|sūnor
 idam uktvā sa nabhaḥ samutpapāta;
 sa hi tad|vapur anya|buddha|darśī
 smṛtaye tasya sameyivān div’|āukāḥ.

As this awareness, stainless and free of passion,
 began to wax strong in that noble man,
 a man approached him wearing a mendicant's garb,
 unseen by any of the other men.

The son of the king then questioned that man:

"Tell me. Who are you?"

And the man gave him this reply:

"Frightened by birth and death, bull among men,
 I have gone forth as a recluse,
 for the sake of release.

I seek release within this perishable world,
 I seek that holy and imperishable state,
 I regard my own people and others alike,
 love and hate of sensual things
 have been extinguished in me.

Dwelling anywhere at all—under trees,
 a deserted temple, forest or hill—
 I wander without possessions or wants,
 living on almsfood I happen to get,
 in search of the supreme goal."

Having said this, he flew into the sky,
 even as the son of the king looked on;
 for he was a deity who in that form
 had seen other Buddhas and had come down
 to arouse the attention of the prince.

5.20

gaganam kha|gavad gate ca tasmin
 nr̄|varah sam̄jahṛṣe visismiye ca;
 upalabhya tataś ca dharma|samjñām*
 abhiniryāṇa|vidhau matim cakāra.

tata Indra|samo jit'|ēndriy'|âsvah
 pravivikṣuh puram aśvam āruroha;
 parivāra|janam tv avekṣamāṇas
 tata ev' âbhimataṁ vanam na bheje.

sa jarā|maraṇa|kṣayam cikīrṣur
 vana|vāsāya matim smṛtau nidhāya
 praviveśa punaḥ puram na kāmād
 vana|bhūmer iva maṇḍalam dvip'|ēndrah.

«sukhitā, bata, nirvṛtā ca sā strī
 patir īdṛksa ih' āyat'|ākṣa yasyāḥ!»
 iti tam samudikṣya rāja|kanyā
 praviśantam pathi s'|āñjalir jagāda.

5.25 atha ghoṣam imam mah”|âbhra|ghoṣah
 pariśuśrāva śamam param ca lebhe;
 śrutavān sa hi «nirvṛt” ēti» śabdam
 parinirvāṇa|vidhau matim cakāra.

When he had flown to the sky like a bird,
that foremost of men was thrilled and amazed;
then, perceiving that emblem of dharma,*
he set his mind on how he might leave home.

Then, that Indra's equal,
who had controlled the horses of senses,
mounted his horse to enter the city;
out of concern for his men he did not
go directly to the forest he loved.

Intending to destroy old age and death,
his mind set on living the forest life,
he entered the city again
unwillingly, like an elephant king
from the forest entering a corral.

On seeing him entering along the road,
a royal maiden, her palms joined, exclaimed:

“Happy, indeed, and fulfilled is the wife,
O Long-eyed One,
Who has for her husband here such a man!”

Then, as he heard this voice,
he obtained supreme calm,
he whose voice was like that of a great thunder cloud;
for, as he heard the word “fulfilled,” he set his mind
on the means to final Nirvanic fulfillment.

atha kāñcana|śaila|śringa|varṣmā
 gaja|mehga|rśabha|bāhu|nisvan'|ākṣaḥ
 kṣayam a|kṣaya|dharmal|jāta|rāgah
 śaśi|simh'|ânana|vikramah prapede.

mṛga|rāja|gatis tato 'bhyagacchan
 nr̥|patim mantri|gaṇair upāsyamānam
 samitau Marutām iva jvalantam
 Maghavantam̄ tri|dive Sanatkumārah.

pranipatya ca s'|âñjalir babhāṣe:
 «diśa mahyam̄, nara|deva, sādhv anujñām;
 parivivrajiṣāmi mokṣa|hetor,
 niyato hy asya janasya viprayogah..»

iti tasya vaco niśamya rājā
 kariṇ” ev’ âbhihato drumaś cacāla
 kamala|pratime ’ñjalau gr̥hitvā
 vacanam̄ c’ êdam uvāca bāṣpa|kaṇṭhah:

5.30 «pratisaṁhara, tāta, buddhim etām,
 na hi kālas tava dharma|saṁśrayasya;
 vayasi prathame matau calāyām
 bahu|doṣām̄ hi vadanti dharma|caryām.

Then, in stature like the peak of the golden mount,
 arms of an elephant, voice of a thunder cloud,
 eyes of a bull, gait of a lion, face like the moon,
 he reached the dwelling place
 with his yearning aroused
 for the dharma that's imperishable.

Then he, with the gait of the king of beasts, approached
 the king attended by the group of ministers,
 as Sanat-kumára in the third heaven approached
 Indra shining in the council of the Maruts.

He prostrated himself with his palms joined and said:

“Kindly grant me permission, O god among men;
 to gain release, I desire the wandering life,
 For separation is appointed for this man.”

Hearing his words, the king began to shake,
 like a tree struck down by an elephant;
 grasping his hands that looked like lotus buds,
 the king uttered these words, choking with tears:

“Turn back, my son, from this resolution,
 for it's not the time for you
 to give yourself to dharma;
 For, when you're young and your mind is fickle,
 there're many dangers, they say,
 in the practice of dharma.

viṣayeṣu kutūhal’|ēndriyasya
 vrata|khedeṣv a|samartha|niścayasya
 taruṇasya manaś calaty aran্যād
 an|abhijñasya višeṣato viveke.

mama tu, priya|dharma, dharma|kālas
 tvayi lakṣmīm avasṛjya lakṣma|bhūte;
 sthira|vikrama, vikrameṇa dharmas
 tava hitvā tu gurum bhaved a|dharmah.

tad imam vyavasāyam utsṛja tvam,
 bhava tāvan nirato gr̥ha|stha|dharme;
 puruṣasya vayah|sukhāni bhuktvā
 ramanīyo hi tapo|vana|praveśah.»

iti vākyam idam niśamya rājñāḥ
 kalaviṅka|svara uttaram babbhāṣe:
 «yadi me pratibhūś caturṣu rājan
 bhavasi tvam na tapo|vanam śrayiṣye.

5.35 na bhaven marañāya jīvitam me,
 viharet svāsthym idam ca me na rogah,
 na ca yauvanam ākṣipej jarā me,
 na ca sampattim imām hared vipattiḥ.»

As objects of sense tend to excite his senses,
 as he can't be firm facing the hardships of vows,
 A young man's mind turns away
 from the wilderness,
 above all as he is not used to solitude.

But for me it is the time for dharma,
 after conferring on you sovereignty,
 you who possess the marks of sovereignty
 O lover of dharma;
 But if you leave your father by violating
 the right order, you whose courage is firm,*
 your dharma will turn into *adhárma*.

So, give up this resolution of yours,
 give yourself for now to household dharma;
 For, when one goes to the ascetic grove
 after he has enjoyed the joys of youth,
 it's truly a wonderful sight!"

Hearing these words of the king, he gave this reply,
 in a voice like that of a *kalavíṅka* bird:

"If you will become a surety for me
 in four things, O King,
 I will not go to the ascetic grove.

My life shall never be subject to death,
 disease shall not steal this good health of mine,
 Old age shall never overtake my youth,
 no mishap shall rob this fortune of mine."

5.35

iti dur|labham artham ūcivāṁsam
 tanayam vākyam uvāca Śākyarājah:
 «tyaja buddhim imām ati|pravṛttām
 avahāsyo ’ti|mano|ratho ’|kramaś ca.»

atha Meru|gurur gurum babhāṣe:
 «yadi n’ āsti krama eṣa, n’ āsmi vāryah;
 śaraṇāj jvalanena dāhyamānān
 na hi niśikramiṣuh Ḫsamam grahitum.

jagataś ca yadā dhruvo viyogo,
 nanu dharmāya varam svayam|viyogah;
 a|vaśam nanu viprayojayen mām
 a|krta|sv’|ârtham a|trptam eva mṛtyuh.»

iti bhūmi|patir niśamya tasya
 vyavasāyam tanayasya nirmumukṣoh
 abhidhāya «na yāsyat’ iti» bhūyo
 vidadhe rakṣaṇam uttamāṁś ca kāmān.

5.40 sacivais tu nidarśito yathāvad
 bahu|mānāt praṇayāc ca śāstra|pūrvam
 guruṇā ca nivārito ’śru|pātaiḥ
 praviveś’ āvasatham tataḥ sa śocan—

To his son making such a hard request,
the king of the Shakyas made this response:

"Withdraw this your request, it is inordinate;
An extravagant wish is improper and extreme."*

Then that one, mighty as Meru, told his father:

"If that's not possible, don't hold me back;
for it is not right to obstruct a man,
Who's trying to escape from a burning house.

When separation is the fixed rule for this world,
is it not far better for dharma's sake
to make that separation on my own?
Will death not separate me as I stand
helpless and unfulfilled,
without reaching my goal?"

When the king thus ascertained the resolve
of his son in search of final release,
he exclaimed, "He shall not leave!"
and made arrangements for security,
and provided him with choicest pleasures.

But when the ministers had duly counseled him,
according to scriptures, with deep respect and love;
and his father had stopped him,
shedding copious tears,
sorrowfully, then, he entered his residence—

calā|kuṇḍala|cumbit'|ânanābhīr
 ghana|niśvāsa|vikampita|stanībhiḥ
 vanitābhīr a|dhīra|locanābhīr
 mṛga|śāvābhīr iv' âbhuyudīkṣyamāṇah.

sa hi kāñcana|parvat'|âvadāto
 hr̥day'|ônmāda|karo var'|âṅganānām
 śravaṇ'|âṅga|vilocan'|ātma|bhāvān
 vacana|sparśa|vapur|guṇair jahāra.

vigate divase tato vimānam
 vapusā sūrya iva pradīpyamāṇah
 timiram̄ vijighāṁsur ātma|bhāsā
 ravir udyann iva Merum āruroha.

kanak'|ōjjvala|dīpta|dīpa|vr̥kṣam̄
 vara|kāl'|âguru|dhūpa|pūrṇa|garbhām
 adhiruhya sa vajra|bhakti|citrām̄
 pravaram̄ kāñcanam̄ āsanam̄ siṣeve.

5.45 tata uttamam uttam'|âṅganās tam̄
 niśi tūryair upatasthur Indra|kalpam
 Himavac|chiras' īva candra|gaure
 Dravin̄'|ēndr'|ātmajam apsaro|gan̄'|âughāḥ.

while young women, their faces kissed by their
dangling earrings, their breasts throbbing with deep
and constant sighs, their eyes darting hither
and thither, gazed up at him like young does.

For he, as bright as the golden mountain
bewitching the hearts of those peerless girls,
enthralled their ears and limbs, their eyes and selves,
with his speech and touch, beauty and virtues.

Then, as the day came to an end,
his body shining like the sun,
he climbed up to the high palace,
like the rising sun Mount Meru,
so as to dispel the darkness
with the light of his self.

Going up to his inner chamber
filled with incense of the best black aloe,
lit by candelabra glistening with gold,
he sat on a splendid seat made of gold
and bespeckled with streaks of diamonds.

Then, during that night, splendid girls
playing their musical instruments
entertained that equal of Indra, that splendid man,
as on the Himalayan peak as white as the moon,
large throngs of *apsarases* entertained
the son of the Lord of Wealth.*

paramair api divya|tūrya|kalpaiḥ
 sa tu tair n' āiva ratim yayau na harṣam;
 param'|ārtha|sukhāya tasya sādhor
 abhiniścikramiṣā yato na reme.

atha tatra surais tapo|variṣṭhair
 Akaniṣṭhair vyavasāyam asya buddhvā
 yugapat pramadā|janasya nidrā
 vihit" āśid vikṛtāś ca gātra|ceṣṭāḥ—

abhavac chayitā hi tatra kā cid
 viniveśya pracale kare kapolam
 dayitām api rukma|pattra|citrāṁ
 kupit" ev' āṅka|gatāṁ vihāya vīṇām;

vibabhau kara|lagna|veṇur anyā
 stana|visrasta|sit'|āṁśukā śayānā
 ṛju|ṣat|pada|pañkti|juṣṭa|padmā
 jalā|phena|prahasat|taṭā nad" īva;

5.50 nava|puṣkara|garbha|komalābhyaṁ
 tapanīy'|ōjjvala|saṁgat'|āṅgadābhyaṁ
 svapiti sma tath" ā|parā bhujābhyaṁ
 parirabhyā priyavan mṛdaṅgam eva;

But even that music of the finest instruments,
 rivaling those of heaven,
 did not bring him mirth or joy;
 the sole desire of that good man was to leave his home
 in search of ultimate joy;
 therefore, he did not rejoice.

Then, Akaníshtha deities, who
 practiced the best austerities,
 became aware of his resolve;
 at once they made those young women succumb
 to sleep,
 and in unsightly postures positioned their limbs—

one was reclining there resting her cheek
 on her unsteady hand, tossing her lute
 adorned with gold leaf resting on her lap
 as if in anger, though she loved it much;

another sparkled, a flute in her hand,
 lying down, her white gown slipping
 from her breasts,
 looking like a river, its banks laughing with foam,
 its lotuses relished by a straight row of bees;*

another slept embracing her tambour,
 as if it were her lover, with her hands
 tender as the hearts of new lotuses,
 glistening gold armlets linked to each other;

5.50

nava|hāṭaka|bhūṣaṇāś tath” ânyā
 vasaṇam pītam an|uttamaṇam vasānāḥ
 a|vaśā ghana|nidrayā nipetur
 gaja|bhagnā iva karṇikāra|śākhāḥ;

avalambya gav'|ākṣa|pārśvam anyā
 śayitā cāpa|vibhugna|gātra|yaṣṭih
 virarāja vilambi|cāru|hārā
 racitā toraṇa|śāla|bhañjik” ēva;

maṇi|kuṇḍala|daṣṭa|pattra|lekham
 mukha|padmaṇam vinataṇam tath” āparasyāḥ
 śata|pattram iv' ārdha|vakra|nāḍam
 sthita|kāraṇḍava|ghaṭṭitam cakāśe;

aparāḥ śayitā yath” ḫpaviṣṭāḥ
 stana|bhārair avanamyamāna|gātrāḥ
 upaguhya paras|param virejur
 bhuja|pāśais tapanīya|pārihāryaiḥ;

5.55 mahatīm parivādinīm ca kā cid
 vanit” ālingya sakhiṁ iva prasuptā
 vijughūrṇa calat|suvarṇa|sūtrā
 vadaneṇ’ ākula|yoktrakena;

others too, decked with jewelry of new gold,
 dressed in peerless yellow clothes,
 fell down helpless overcome by deep sleep,
 like a *karnikára* branch
 torn down by an elephant;*

another slept leaning on a window,
 her slender body was bent like a bow;
 she sparkled, her lovely necklace dangling,
 looking like a *shala* plucker
 carved upon a gateway;*

another had her lotus-face bent down,
 her jeweled earrings scraping
 the decorative lines on her face,
 looking like a lotus with its stalk half bent down,
 pushed by the perching of a *karándava* coot;*

others were resplendent—
 lying down where they sat,
 bodies bent down by the weight of their breasts,
 embracing each other with entwined arms
 adorned with golden bracelets;

one girl in deep sleep embraced her large lute
 as if it were her girl-friend,
 as she rolled, her gold chains shook,
 her earrings in disarray on her face;

pañavam yuvatir bhuj' |âmsa|deśād
 avavisraṁsita|cārul|pāśam anyā
 sa|vilāsa|rati'|ânta|tāntam ūrvor
 vivare kāntam iv' âbhinīya śisye;

aparā na babhur* nimilit'|âksyo
 vipul'|âksyo 'pi śubha|bhruvo 'pi satyah
 pratisaṁkucit'|âravinda|kośāḥ
 savitary astam ite yathā nalinyah;

śithil'|ākula|mūrdhajā tath" ânyā
 jaghana|srasta|vibhūṣaṇ'|âmśu|kāntā
 aśayiṣṭa vikīrṇa|kaṇṭha|sūtrā
 gaja|bhagnā pratiyātan'|âṅgan" êva;

aparās tv a|vaśā hriyā viyuktā
 dhṛti|matyo 'pi vapur|guṇair upetāḥ
 viniśaśvasur ulbaṇam śayānā
 vikṛtāḥ kṣipta|bhujā jaṛmbhire ca;

5.60 vyapaviddha|vibhūṣaṇa|srajo 'nyā
 visṛt'|āgranthana|vāsaso vi|saṁjñāḥ
 a|nimilita|śukla|niścal'|âksyo
 na virejuḥ śayitā gat'|âsu|kalpāḥ;

another girl was lying down
laying her drum between her thighs—
 the drum's beautiful cord
 slipping from her shoulder—
like a lover lying exhausted
after making passionate love;

but others, though their brows were pretty,
and their eyes were large,
displayed no beauty with their eyes closed,
like lotuses with their flower-buds closed
after the setting of the sun;

another girl likewise was lying there,
her hair disheveled and hanging loose,
her clothes and ornaments slipping down
from her waist, her necklaces scattered,
 like a statue of a girl
 trampled by an elephant;

although genteel and endowed with beauty,
others were snoring with their mouths agape,
without any shame and out of control,
with limbs distorted and arms extended,
sleeping in immodest pose;

others looked revolting, lying as if dead,
their jewelry and their garlands fallen down,
unconscious, with eyes unblinking,
the whites gazing in a fixed stare;

5.60

vivṝt' |āsyā|puṭā vivṝddha|gātrī
 prapatad|vaktraljalā prakāśa|guhyā
 aparā mada|ghūrṇit" ēva śisye
 na babhāse vikṛtam vapuh pupoṣa.

iti sattva|kul' |ânvay' |ânurūpam
 vividham sa pramadā|janah śayānah
 sarasah sadṛśam babhāra rūpam
 pavan' |āvarjita|rugna|puṣkarasya.

samavekṣya tathā tathā śayānā
 vikṛtās tā yuvatīr a|dhīra|ceṣṭāḥ
 guṇavad|vapoṣo 'pi valgu|bhāṣā
 nṛpa|sūnuḥ sa vigarhayām babhūva:

«a|śucir vikṛtaś ca jīva|loke
 vanitānām ayam īdrśaḥ sva|bhāvah;
 vasan' |ābharaṇais tu vañcyamānah
 puruṣaḥ strī|viṣayeṣu rāgam eti.

5.65 vimṛśed yadi yoṣitām manuṣyah
 prakṛtim svapna|vikāram īdrśam ca,
 dhruvam atra na vardhayet pramādaṁ
 guṇa|saṅkalpa|hatas tu rāgam eti.»

iti tasya tad|antaram viditvā
 niśi niścikramiṣā samudbabhūva;
 avagamya manas tato 'sya devair
 bhavana|dvāram apāvṛtam babhūva.

another was lying as if she was drunk,
 mouth wide open and saliva oozing,
 legs wide open and genitals exposed,
 body distorted, looking repulsive.

Thus, in diverse postures those enticing girls slept,
 each in keeping with her nature,
 her family and pedigree;
 in appearance they resembled a pond,
 with its lilies knocked down, crushed by the wind.

When he saw those girls sleeping in such poses,
 their bodies distorted, movements unrestrained,
 the king's son gave vent to his utter contempt—
 though their bodies were exquisite,
 and the way they spoke was so sweet:

“Dirty and distorted lies here exposed
 the true nature of women in this world;
 Deluded by their nice clothes and jewelry,
 men become infatuated with them.

If men reflect on women's true nature
 and this mutation brought about by sleep,
 Surely their passion for them would not wax;
 yet, struck by the thought of their elegance,
 they become infatuated with them.”

5.65

When he understood thus their difference,
 the urge to depart surged in him that night;
 when the gods discerned his intention, then,
 they opened the door of his residence.

atha so 'vatatāra harmya|pr̄ṣṭhād
 yuvatīs tāḥ śayitā vigarhamāṇah;
 avatīrya tataś ca nir|viśāṇko
 gṛha|kakṣyām̄ prathamām̄ vinirjagāma.

turag'|âvacaram̄ sa bodhayitvā
 javinam̄ Chandakam̄ ittham̄ ity uvāca:
 «hayam̄ ānaya Kanthakam̄ tvarāvān!
 a|mṛtam̄ prāptum̄ ito 'dyā me yiyāsā.

hṛdi yā mama tuṣṭir adya jātā
 vyavasāyaś ca yathā matau niviṣṭah̄
 vijane 'pi ca nāthavān iv' āsmi,
 dhruvam artho 'bhimukhaḥ sameta iṣṭah̄.

5.70 hriyam eva ca saṃnatim̄ ca hitvā
 śayitā mat|pramukhe yathā yuvatyah̄
 vivrte ca yathā svayam̄ kapāṭe
 niyatam̄ yātum ato mam' ādya kālah..»

pratigṛhya tataḥ sa bhartur ājñām̄
 vidit'|ārtho 'pi nar'|ēndra|śāsanasya
 manas' īva pareṇa codyamānas
 tura|gasy' ānayane matim̄ cakāra.

Then, he came down from the palace roof-top,
in utter contempt of those sleeping girls;
having come down, then, resolute,
he went out to the first courtyard.

He woke up Chándaka and told
that quick-footed groom of his horse:

“Quickly bring the horse Kánthaka!
I want to leave this place today,
To arrive at the deathless state.

Contentment has arisen in my heart,
and resolve has taken hold of my mind;
Even in a deserted place
I do have some sort of a guide;
The goal I yearn for has appeared
before my eyes, that is certain.

Abandoning modesty and deference,
the girls slept right in front of me;
And the doors were thrown open on their own—
so today is the time I must
depart from this place, that's certain.”

5.70

Then, although he knew well the king's decree,
he acceded to his master's command;
and he made up his mind to bring the horse,
his mind as if goaded by someone else.

atha hema|khalīna|pūrṇa|vaktram
laghu|śayy”|āstaran’|ōpagūḍha|prṣṭham
bala|sattva|jav’|ānvay’|ōpapannam
sa var’|āśvam tam upānināya bhartrē,
pratata|trikal|puccha|mūla|pārṣṇim
nibhṛta|hṛasva|tanūja|puccha|karṇam
vinat’|ōnnata|prṣṭha|kuksi|pārśvam
vipula|protha|lalāṭa|katy|uraskam.

upagr̥hya sa tam viśāla|vakṣāḥ
kamal’|ābhena ca sāntvayan kareṇa
madhur’|ākṣarayā girā śāśāsa
dhvajinī|madhyam iva praveṣṭu|kāmaḥ:

5.75 «bahuśāḥ kila śatravo nirastāḥ
samare tvām adhiruhya pārthivena;
aham apy a|mṛtam padam yathāvat,
turaga|śreṣṭha, labheya tat kuruṣva.

sullaṁbhāḥ khalu samyuge sahāyā
viṣay’|āvāpta|sukhe dhan’|ārjane vā;
puruṣasya tu dur|labhāḥ sahāyāḥ
patitasy’ āpadi dharma|saṁśraye vā.

iha c’ āiva bhavanti ye sahāyāḥ
kaluṣe karmaṇi dharma|saṁśraye vā,
avagacchatī me yath” āntar|ātmā
niyatam te ’pi janās tad|amśa|bhājah.

Then, he brought to his lord that sterling steed,
a horse endowed with strength, heart, speed,
and breed—

its mouth was furnished with a golden bit,
its back was covered with a soft bedspread,
its chine, rump, and fetlocks were long,
hair, tail, and ears were short and still,
with sunken back, bulging belly and flanks,
and with wide nostrils, forehead, hips and chest.

The wide-chested prince then embraced that horse,
caressing it with his lotus-like hand;
he ordered it in a sweet voice, as if
wishing to charge into enemy lines:

“Many a time did the sovereign mount you,
and vanquish in battle his foes;
that is well known;
So act in such a way, O best of steeds,
that I too may obtain the deathless state.

5.75

Companions are easy to find to fight a war,
to win riches or to enjoy sensual delights;
But they are hard to find when one is in dire straits,
or when one takes to the path of dharma.

The companions of a man in this world
in foul acts or in the path of dharma,
They too will doubtless partake of the fruits,
this is what I’m told by my inner self.

tad idam parigamya dharma|yuktam
 mama niryanam ito jagadd|hītāya,
 turag'|ottama, vega|vikramābhyaṁ
 prayatasv' ātmā|hite jagadd|hite ca.»

iti su|hṛdam iv' ânuśiṣya kṛtye
 turaga|varaṁ nr̄|varo vanam yiyāsuḥ
 sitam a|sita|gati|dyutir vapusmān
 rāvir iva śāradam abhram āruroha.

5.80 atha sa parihaarā niśītha|caṇḍam
 parijanā|bodha|karam dhvanim sad|aśvah
 vigata|hanu|ravaḥ praśānta|heśaś
 cakita|vimukta|pada|kramo jagāma.

kanaka|valaya|bhūṣita|prakoṣṭhaiḥ
 kamala|nibhaiḥ kamalān iva pravidhya
 avanata|tanavas tato 'sya yakṣāś
 cakita|gataair dadhire khurān kar'|âgraiḥ.

guru|parigha|kapāṭa|saṁvṛtā yā
 na sukham api dvi|radair apāvriyante,
 vrajati nr̄pa|sute gata|svanās tāḥ
 svayam abhavan vivṛtāḥ puraḥ pratolyaḥ.

Knowing, therefore, that my exit from here
 is connected with dharma
 and for the good of the world,
 Strive, you best of horses, with speed and dare,
 for your own welfare
 and that of the world."

Wishing to enter the forest, that finest king
 thus instructed in his duty that finest horse,
 as if he were a friend;
 and that handsome prince, who was blazing like a fire,
 mounted the white horse, like the sun
 an autumn cloud.

Then, the good horse went without making any sound 5.80
 that would cause alarm in the night
 or awaken the attendants;
 his jaws made no noise and his neighing
 was suppressed;
 he walked with unwavering steps.

Yakshas, then, bending their bodies low, supported
 the horse's hooves with the tips of their
 trembling hands,
 hands that resembled lotus buds,
 forearms adorned with golden bands,
 so that it seemed they were scattering lotuses.

As the prince made his way, the city's gates
 opened noiselessly on their own,
 gates that were closed with heavy iron bars,
 gates not easily burst open
 even by elephants.

pitaram abhimukham sutam ca balam
 janam anuraktam an|uttamam ca laksmim
 krta|matir apahaya nir|vyapekshah
 pitr|nagarat sa tato vinirjagama.

atha sa vimala|painkaj'|ayat'|aksah
 puram avalokya nanada simha|nadam:
 «janana|maraṇayor aldrṣṭa|pāro
 na puram aham Kapil'|āhvayam praveṣṭā.»

5.85 iti vacanam idam niśamya tasya
 Draviṇa|pateḥ pariṣad|gaṇā nananduh
 pramudita|manasaś ca deva|saṅghā
 vyavasita|pāraṇam āśāśaṁsire 'smai.

huta|vaha|vapuso div'|āukaso 'nye
 vyavasitam asya su|duṣ|karam viditvā
 akṛṣata tuhine pathi prakāśam
 ghana|vivara|prasṛtā iv' ēndu|pādāḥ.

hari|turaga|turaṅgavat turaṅgah
 sa tu vicaran manas' īva codyamānah
 aruna|paruṣa|tāram antar|ikṣam
 sa ca su|bahūni jagāma yojanāni.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye 'bhiniṣkramaṇo nāma
 pañcamah sargah.

He then left the city of his father,
firm in his resolve and unwavering,
leaving his loving father and young son,
his devout subjects and highest fortune.

Then he, with long eyes like white lotuses,
caught sight of the city
and roared this lion-roar:

“I will not enter this city called Kápila,
Before I’ve seen the farther shore of birth and death.”

Hearing these words of his, the retinue
of the court of the Lord of Wealth rejoiced,
and hosts of deities, their minds filled with joy,
announced to him the success of his vow.

5.85

Other fiery-bodied denizens of heaven,
knowing his vow was exceedingly hard to keep,
shined a light on his frosty path,
like moonbeams coming down through
an opening in a cloud.

As that steed sped along like the steed of the sun,
its mind as if spurred on, he traveled many leagues,
before the stars became faint in the sky
at the coming of the dawn.

Thus ends the fifth canto named “The Departure”
of the great poem “Life of the Buddha.”



CANTO 6
CHÁNDAKA IS SENT BACK

6.1 **T**ATO MUHŪRT'âbhudite
jagac|cakṣuṣi bhāṣ|kare
Bhārgavasy' āśrama|padam
sa dadarśa nṛṇām varah.

supta|viśvasta|hariṇam
sva|stha|sthita|vihaṅgamam
viśrānta iva yad dṛṣṭvā
kṛt'|ārtha iva c' ābhavat.

sa vismaya|nivṛtty|artham
tapah|pūj"|"ārtham eva ca
svām c' ānuvartitam rakṣann
aśva|prṛṣṭhād avātarat.

avatīrya ca pasparśa
«nistīrṇam» iti vājinam
Chandakam c' ābravīt prītaḥ
snāpayann iva cakṣuṣā:

6.5 «imam Tārkṣy'|ōpama|javam
turañ|gam anugacchatā
darśitā saumya mad|bhaktir
vikramaś c' āyam ātmanah.

sarvath" āsmi anya|kāryo 'pi
gr̥hīto bhavatā hṛdi,
bhartṛ|snehaś ca yasy' āyam
īdr̥śah śaktir eva ca.

THEN, AT THE moment when the sun,
the eye of the world, rose,
that best of men beheld
Bhárgava's hermitage.*

When he saw that hermitage,
with deer sleeping full of trust,
birds resting in perfect ease,
he felt as if he was refreshed,
as if he had attained his goal.

To remove any arrogance,
and to respect ascetic toil,
to guard his own subservience,*
he got down from the horse.

Having got down, he stroked the horse,
saying: "You have fulfilled your task;"
he spoke to Chándaka, full of joy,
as if bathing him with his eyes:

"By following this steed,
as fast as Gáruda,
You have shown devotion to me,
as well as this prowess of yours.

I'm given wholly to other pursuits,
yet you have clasped me to your heart;
Your devotion to your master
is paralleled by such ability.

a|snigdho 'pi samartha 'sti
 niḥ|sāmarthyo 'pi bhaktimān;
 bhaktimāṁś c' āiva śaktaś ca
 dur|labhas tvad|vidho bhuvi.

tat prīto 'smi tav' ânena
 mahā|bhāgena karmaṇā;
 yasya te mayi bhāvo 'yam
 phalebhyo 'pi parāṇ|mukhah.

ko janasya phala|sthasya
 na syād abhimukho janah;
 janī|bhavati bhūyiṣṭham
 sva|jano 'pi viparyaye.

6.10 kul'|ârtham̄ dhāryate putrah,
 poṣ'|ârtham̄ sevyate pitā,
 āśayāc chliṣyati jagan;
 n' āsti niṣ|kāraṇā svatā.

kim uktvā bahu? saṃkṣepāt,
 kṛtam̄ me su|mahat priyam;
 nivartasv' âsvam ādāya
 saṃprāpto 'sm' īpsitam̄ padam.»

ity uktvā sa mahā|bāhur
 anuśāmsa|cikīrṣayā
 bhūṣaṇāny avamucy' âsmai
 saṃtaptā|manase dadau.

One may be capable without being devoted,
 one may be devoted without being capable;
 But one who is both capable and devoted,
 such as you, is difficult to find in this world.

I am delighted, therefore,
 at this lofty deed of yours;
 This love of yours toward me,
 has no regard for rewards.

What man will not fawn upon
 someone bestowing rewards;
 When the tide turns, for the most part,
 even kinsfolk act like strangers.

One supports a son for family's sake,
 one serves the father to get sustenance;
 The world shows affection for a motive;
 kinship cannot endure without a cause.

6.10

What is the use of saying more? In short,
 it's a great favor you have done for me;
 Take the horse with you and return,
 I've arrived at the desired spot."

After saying this, the mighty-armed prince,
 wishing to render an act of kindness,
 took off his jewelry and gave it
 to that broken-hearted man.

mukuṭād dīpa|karmāṇam
 maṇim ādāya bhāsvaram
 bruvan vākyam idam tasthau
 s'āditya iva Mandarah:

«anena maṇinā, Chanda,
 praṇamya bahuśo nṛpaḥ
 vijñāpyo 'mukta|viśrambham
 samṛtāpa|vinivṛttaye:

6.15 ījarā|maraṇa|nāś'|ārtham
 praviṣṭo 'smi tapo|vanam,
 na khalu svarga|tarṣeṇa
 n' ā|snehen' ēha na manyunā.

tad evam abhiniṣkrāntam
 na māṁ śocitum arhasi;
 bhūtv" āpi hi ciram śleṣah,
 kālena na bhaviṣyati.

dhrubo yasmāc ca viślesas
 tasmān mokṣāya me matih—
 «viprayogaḥ katham na syād
 bhūyo 'pi svaljanād» iti.

śoka|tyāgāya niṣkrāntam
 na māṁ śocitum arhasi;
 śoka|hetusu kāmeṣu
 saktāḥ śocyās tu rāgiṇah.

Taking the shining gem from his head-dress,
 a gem that performed the task of a lamp,
 he stood there as he made this oration,
 like Mount Mándara holding up the sun:

“With this gem, Chanda, you must pay
 repeated homage to the king,
 And beseech him without being diffident,
 to relieve his anguish, using these words:

‘I’ve entered the ascetic grove
 not because I long for heaven,
 am angry, or lack affection,
 but to destroy old age and death.

6.15

Therefore, please do not grieve for me,
 who have departed in this way;
 for a union however long
 will in due course come to an end.

Since separation is certain,
 I have turned my mind to release
 with the thought—“How may I never again
 be separated from my relatives?”

Therefore, please do not grieve for me,
 who have departed to end grief;
 grieve rather for passionate men,
 attached to pleasures that cause grief.

ayam ca kila pūrveśām
 asmākam niścayah̄ sthirah̄
 iti dāy' |ādya|bhūtena
 na śocyo 'smi pathā vrajan.

6.20 bhavanti hy artha|dāy' |ādāḥ
 puruṣasya viparyaye;
 pṛthivyām dharma|dāy' |ādāḥ
 dur|labhās tu, na santi vā.

yad api syād «a|samaye
 yāto vanam asāv» iti,
 a|kālo n' āsti dharmasya
 jīvite cañcale sati.

tasmād «ady' āiva me śreyaś
 cetavyam» iti niścayah̄;
 jīvite ko hi viśrambho
 mr̄tyau praty|arthini sthite?;

evam|ādi tvayā, saumya,
 vijñāpyo vasudh" |ādhipah̄;
 prayatethās tathā c' āiva
 yathā mām na smared api.

api naирgunyam asmākam
 vācyam nara|patau tvayā;
 naирgunyāt tyajyate snehah̄,
 sneha|tyāgān na śocaye.»

This was the firm resolution,
as you know, of our ancestors;
do not grieve for me as I walk
on this path, my patrimony.

For when a man passes away,
there are here heirs to his wealth;
but heirs to dharma on this earth
are absent or hard to find.

6.20

Should you argue that I have departed
to the forest at an improper time;
for pursuing dharma there is no time
that's improper when life's so insecure.

Therefore, I have resolved, I must
this very day seek final bliss;
for what trust can one place in life,
when death, its foe, is standing by?"

With words such as these, my dear man,
you should beseech the Lord of Earth;
Try your best, likewise, to ensure
that he won't even think of me.

Even tell the king that I lack virtue;
he will stop loving me
Because I lack virtue;
when he stops loving me,
his grief will surely cease."

6.25 iti vākyam idam śrutvā
 Chandaḥ samṛtāpa|viklavaḥ
 bāṣpa|grathitayā vācā
 pratyuvāca kṛt'|āñjaliḥ:

«anena tava bhāvena
 bāndhav'|āyāsa|dāyinā,
 bhartah, sīdati me ceto
 nadī|pañka iva dvi|pah.

kasya n' ôtpādayed bāṣpam
 niścayas te 'yam īdrśah
 ayo|maye 'pi hṛdaye,
 kim punah sneha|viklave?

vimāna|śayan'|ârham hi
 saukumāryam idam kva ca!
 khara|darbh'|āñkuravatī
 tapo|vana|mahī kva ca!

śrutvā tu vyavasāyam te
 yad aśvo 'yam may" āhṛtaḥ
 balāt|kāreṇa tan, nātha,
 daiven' āiv' āsmi kāritah.

6.30 katham hy ātma|vaśo jānan
 vyavasāyam imam tava
 upānayeyam tura|gam
 śokam Kapilavāstunah?

When he heard these words of his,
Chanda, overcome by grief,
folded his hands and replied
in a voice choking with tears:

6.25

“Seeing you in this frame of mind,
causing anguish to your kinsfolk,
My mind sinks, O my Lord, just like
an elephant in river mud.

Who indeed would not be reduced to tears
at the kind of resolve that you have made,
Even if his heart was carved out of steel?
How much more when it is throbbing with love?

Look at this delicate body of yours,
fit to lie on a palace bed!
Look at the ground of the ascetic grove,
strewn with harsh blades of *darbha* grass!

But after hearing your resolve,
when I brought to you the horse,
I was forced to do it, My Lord,
clearly by some divine force.

For knowing this resolve of yours,
would I have brought to you the horse,
To make Kápila-vastu grieve,
had I been master of myself?

6.30

tan n' ârhasi, mahâ|bâho,
 vihâtum putra|lâlasam
 snigdham vîddham ca râjânam
 sad|dharmam iva n'|âstikah.

samvârdhana|pariśrântâm
 dvitîyâm tâm ca mâtaram
 devîm n' ârhasi vismaratum
 kṛta|ghna iva sat|kriyâm.

bâla|putrâm guṇavatîm
 kula|slâghyâm pati|vratâm
 devîm arhasi na tyaktum
 klîbah prâptâm iva śriyam.

putram Yâśodharâm slâghyam
 yaśo|dharma|bhṛtâm varam
 bâlam arhasi na tyaktum
 vyasan' iv' ôttamam yaśah.

6.35 atha bandhum ca râjyam ca
 tyaktum eva kṛtā matih,
 mâm n' ârhasi, vibho, tyaktum
 tvat|pâdau hi gatir mama.

n' âsmi yâtum puram śakto
 dâhyamânenâ cetasâ
 tvâm aranye parityajya
 Sumantra iva Râghavam.

Please do not, therefore, O mighty-armed prince,
 forsake the king who so longs for his son;
 Like infidels forsaking true dharma,
 please do not forsake that tender old king.

Please do not forget that
 second mother of yours,
 The queen exhausted by bringing you up,
 like an ingrate who forgets a good deed.

Please do not abandon that virtuous queen,
 faithful to her lord, with an infant son,
 The queen who's born in an illustrious line,
 like a sissy his inherited crown.

Please don't abandon your young son,
 Yasho-dhara's illustrious child,
 Best bearer of dharma and fame,*
 like a villain the highest fame.

If, however, you have made up your mind
 to abandon your father and kingdom,
 Please don't abandon me, My Lord,
 for your feet are my sole refuge.

6.35

I cannot go to the city
 with a heart smoldering with grief
 Abandoning you in the wild,
 like Sumántra did Rágava.*

kim hi vakṣyati mām rājā
 tvad|ṛte nagaram gatam?
 vakṣyāmy ucita|darśitvāt
 kim tav' āntah|purāṇi vā?

yad apy ātth' *āpi* naирguṇyam
 vācyam nara|patāv iti,
 kim tad vakṣyāmy a|bhūtam te
 nir|doṣasya muner iva?

hṛdayena sa|lajjena
 jihvayā sajjamānayā
 aham yady api vā brūyām,
 kas tac chrad|dhātum arhati?

6.40 yo hi candramasas taiksnyam
 kathayec chrad|dadhīta vā,
 sa doṣāṁs tava, doṣajñā,
 kathayec chrad|dadhīta vā.

s'|ānukrośasya satatam
 nityam karuṇa|vedināḥ
 snigdha|tyāgo na sadrśo;
 nivartasva, prasīda me.»

iti śok'|ābhībhūtasya
 śrutvā Chandasya bhāṣitam
 sva|sthāḥ paramayā dhṛtyā
 jagāda vadatām varah:

For what will the king say to me
when I come to the city without you?
What will I, because I'm used to seeing them,
say to women in the seraglio?*

You say that I should even tell the king
that you lack any virtue;
But how can I tell a lie about you,
as about a faultless sage?

Even if I did say that
with a heart laden with shame
And with a stuttering tongue,
who will ever believe that?

For if a man believes in and declares
the scorching power of the moon,
Such a man may, indeed, you who know faults,
believe in and declare your faults.

6.40

To forsake loved one does not befit you,
you who are at all times tender at heart;
You who are compassionate at all times,
have pity on me and turn back."

Having heard these words of Chanda,
who was overcome by grief,
that best of speakers, self-composed,
spoke with the utmost resolve:

«mad|viyogam̄ prati, Chanda,
 samtāpas tyajyatām ayam;
 nānā|bhāvo hi niyatam̄
 pṛthag|jātiṣu dehiṣu.

sva|janam̄ yady api snehān
 na tyajeyam aham̄ svayam,
 mṛtyur anyo|nyam a|vaśān
 asmān samtyājayiṣyati.

6.45 mahatyā tṛṣṇayā duḥkhair
 garbheṇ̄ âsmi yayā dhṛtaḥ,
 tasyā niṣphala|yatnāyāḥ
 kv' âham̄ mātuḥ, kva sā mama?

vāsa|vṛkṣe samāgamyā
 vigacchanti yath" âṇḍaljāḥ,
 niyataṁ viprayog'|āntas
 tathā bhūta|samāgamah.

sametya ca yathā bhūyo
 vyapayānti balāhakāḥ,
 samyogo viprayogaś ca
 tathā me prāṇinām̄ mataḥ.

yasmād yāti ca loko 'yam
 vipralabhyā param|param
 matavām̄ na kṣamam̄ tasmāt
 svapna|bhūte samāgame.

“Abandon, Chanda, this anguish
 at your separation from me;
 Embodied beings in diverse births
 are bound to part from each other.

Even if out of love I forsake not
 my kinsmen on my own,
 Death will make us abandon each other
 even against our will.

She bore me in her womb
 with great yearning and pain;
 Yet her efforts are vain:
 What am I to my mother?
 What is she to me?

6.45

As birds come to a tree to roost
 and then go their separate ways,
 So the union of beings is bound
 to conclude in dissolution.

As clouds gather together
 only to scatter apart,
 So, I reckon, is the union
 and disunion of living beings.

As this world continues to roll
 sundering one from another,
 So it's wrong to invest yourself
 in this coming together
 that's as fleeting as a dream.

sahajena viyujyante
 parṇa|rāgeṇa pāda|pāḥ;
 anyen' ânyasya viśleṣaḥ
 kim punar na bhaviṣyati?

6.50 tad evam sati saṃtāpam
 mā kārṣīḥ, saumya! gamyatām!
 lambate yadi tu sneho
 gatv" āpi punar āvraja.

brūyāś c' āsmat|kṛt'|āpekṣam
 janam Kapilavāstuni:
 «tyajyatām tad|gataḥ snehah!
 śrūyatām c' āsyā niścayah!

ksipram eṣyati vā kṛtvā
 janma|mṛtyu|ksayam kila;
 a|kṛt'|ārtho nir|ārambho
 nidhanam yāsyat' iti vā.» »

iti tasya vacaḥ śrutvā
 Kanthakas turag'|ōttamaḥ
 jihvayā lilihe pādau
 bāṣpam uṣṇam mumoca ca.

jālinā svastik'|āṅkena
 cakra|madhyena pāṇinā
 āmamarśa kumāras tam
 babhāṣe ca vayasyavat:

If innate leaves fall from trees
as their color turns;*
Why surely will not one being
be severed from another?

So, that being the case, my dear man,
do not grieve! Be on your way!
If, however, your love endures,
leave now, but return again.

And tell the folks of Kápila·vastu,
who have affection for me:

‘Give up your love for him!
Listen to his resolve!

After destroying birth and death,
he will return quickly, I’m told;
or lacking initiative
and failing to reach the goal,
he will proceed to his death.”

After hearing these words of his,
Kánthaka, the best of steeds,
licked with his tongue the prince’s feet,
and began to shed warm tears.

With his webbed hand, swastika-marked,
having the wheel-mark on its palm,
the prince stroked the horse soothingly,
and he spoke to him like a friend:

6.50

6.55 «muñca, Kanthaka, mā bāśpam
darśit” ēyam sad|aśvatā;
mr̥ṣyatām, sa|phalah śīghram
śramas te ’yam bhaviṣyati!»

mani|tsarum Chandaka|hasta|saṁsthām
tataḥ sa dhīro niśitām gṛhītvā
kośād asim kāñcana|bhakti|citraṁ
bilād iv’ âśi|viśam udbabarha.

niśkāsyā tam c’ ôtpala|pattra|nilam
ciccheda citraṁ mukuṭam sa|keśam
vikīryamān’|âṁśukam antar|ikṣe
cikṣepa c’ âinam Saras’ īva haṁsam.

pūj”|ābhilāṣeṇa ca bāhu|mānyād
div’|āukasas tam jagṛhuḥ praviddham
yathāvad enam divi deva|saṅghā
divyair viśeṣair mahayām ca cakruḥ.

muktvā tv alamkāra|kalatravattām
śrī|vipravāsam śīrasaś ca kṛtvā
dr̥ṣṭv” āṁśukam kāñcana|haṁsa|cihnām
vanyam sa dhīro ’bhicakāṅkṣa vāsah.

6.60 tato mr̥ga|vyādhā|vapur div’|āukā
bhāvam viditv” āsyā viśuddha|bhāvah
kāśāya|vastro ’bhiyayau samīpam
tam Śākyā|rāja|prabhavo ’bhyuvāca:

“Please, Kánthaka, do not shed tears,
you’ve been a good horse;
Be patient, and this toil of yours
will quickly bear fruit!”

6.55

Then, from Chándaka’s hand the resolute prince took the sword with the hilt inlaid with gems; he then drew out the sword from its scabbard, with its blade streaked with gold, like a snake from its hole.

Unsheathing the sword, dark as a lotus petal, he cut his ornate head-dress along with the hair, and threw it in the air, the cloth trailing behind—it seemed he was throwing a swan into a lake.

As it was thrown up, heavenly beings caught it out of reverence so they may worship it; throngs of gods in heaven paid it homage with divine honors according to rule.

Freeing himself from beloved adornments, exiling royal splendor from his head, seeing the cloth band resembling a gold swan, he steadfastly longed for the sylvan robe.

Then, a pure heavenly being, knowing his wish, took on the appearance of a hunter and came near him wearing an ochre robe; the son of the Shakya king said to him:

6.60

«śivam ca kāśayam ṛṣi|dhvajas te
 na yuujyate himsram idam dhanus ca;
 tat, saumya, yady asti na saktir atra
 mahyam prayacch' ēdam idam gṛhāṇa.»

vyādho 'bravīt: «kāmada, kāmam ārād
 anena viśvāsyā mṛgān nihānmi;
 arthas tu Śakr'opama yady anena,
 hanta, pratīcch' ānaya śuklam etat.»

pareṇa harṣeṇa tataḥ sa vanyam
 jagrāha vāso 'mśukam utsasarja;
 vyādhas tu divyam vapur eva bibhrat
 tac chuklam ādāya divam jagāma.

tataḥ kumāraś ca sa c' āśvalgopas
 tasmiṁs tathā yāti visismiyāte
 āraṇyake vāsasi c' āiva bhūyas
 tasminn akārṣṭām bahu|mānam āśu.

6.65 Chandaṁ tataḥ s'śru|mukham visṛjya
 kāśaya|saṁbhṛḍ dhṛti|kīrti|bhṛt saḥ
 yen' āśramas tena yayau mah"jātmā,
 saṁdhy"jābhra|saṁvīta iv' ḫdu|rājah.

tatas tathā bhartari rājya|niḥ|spṛhe
 tapo|vanam yāti vivarṇa|vāsasi
 bhujau samutkṣipyā tataḥ sa vājī|bhṛḍ
 bhṛśam vicukrośa papāta ca kṣitau.

“This deadly bow of yours does not go with
 your holy ochre robe that’s the seer’s badge;
 So, good man, if you’re not attached to it,
 give me the robe and take this in exchange.”

The hunter replied:

“Dispenser of desires, although with this
 I inspire trust from afar and kill deer;
 If you, Shakra’s equal, have need for it,
 however, take it and give me the white.”*

Then, with great joy he took the sylvan robe
 and cast away the garment of fine cloth;
 but the hunter, assuming his own divine form,
 went up to heaven taking with him the white clothes.

Then, the prince and the keeper of the horse
 marveled as he departed in that wise,
 and forthwith regarded that sylvan robe
 with a reverence all the more great.

Then, having dismissed the tearful Chanda,
 the noble one went to the hermitage
 wearing the ochre robe
 and the fame of resolve,
 like the king of stars wrapped in twilight clouds.*

6.65

Then, as his master went to the ascetic grove,
 with no longing for kingdom, wearing dirty clothes,
 the keeper of the horse threw up his arms
 and, weeping bitterly, fell on the ground.

vilokya bhūyaś ca ruroda sa|svaram
 hayaṁ bhujābhyaṁ upaguhya Kanthakam;
 tato nir|āśo vilapan muhur muhur
 yayau śarīreṇa puram, na cetasā.

kva cit pradadhyau, vilalāpa ca kva cit,
 kva cit pracaskhāla, papāta ca kva cit;
 ato vrajan bhakti|vaśena duḥkhitaś
 cacāra bahvīr a|vaśah* pathi kriyāḥ.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye Chandaka|nivartano nāma
 ṣaṣṭhah sargah.

CHÁNDAKA IS SENT BACK 6

Looking at him again he wept aloud,
clasping the horse, Kánthaka, with his arms;
then, in despair, lamenting over and over again,
he returned to the city with his body, not his mind.

Sometimes he brooded, sometimes he wept,
sometimes he staggered, sometimes he fell;
so, driven by his devotion,
sorrowfully he went,
doing many things along the road,
in complete abandon.

Thus ends the sixth canto named “Chándaka is Sent Back”
of the great poem “Life of the Buddha.”



CANTO 7
ENTERING THE ASCETIC GROVE

7.1

TATO VISRJY' âśru|mukham rudantam
 Chandam vana|cchandatayā nir|āsthah
 Sarvārthaśiddho vapus" âbhībhūya
 tam āśramam siddha iva prapede.

sa rāja|sūnur mṛga|rāja|gāmī
 mṛg'|ājiram tan mṛgavat praviṣṭah
 lakṣmī|viyukto 'pi śarīra|lakṣmyā
 cakṣūṁsi sarv'āśraminām jahāra.

sthitā hi hasta|stha|yugās tath" āiva
 kautūhalāc cakra|dharāḥ sa|dārāḥ
 tam Indra|kalpaṁ dadṛśur, na jagmur,
 dhuryā iv' ārdh'|āvanataih ūro bhiḥ.

viprāś ca gatvā bahir idhma|hetoh
 prāptāḥ samit|puṣpa|pavitra|hastāḥ
 tapah|pradhānāḥ kṛta|buddhayo 'pi
 tam draṣṭum īyur na maṭhān abhīyuḥ—

7.5

hrṣṭāś ca kekā mumucur mayūrā
 dr̥ṣṭv" āmbu|dam nīlam iv' ônnamantah;
 śaspāṇi hitv" ābhīmukhāś ca tāstur
 mṛgāś cal'|ākṣā mṛga|cāriṇāś ca.

THEN, BEING detached through his longing
for the forest
and dismissing Chanda, teary-eyed and weeping,
Sarvártha-siddha went into that hermitage,
like a *siddha*, engulfing it with his beauty.*

The king's son, walking like the king of beasts,
like a deer, entered that abode of deer;
though stripped of royal majesty,
the majesty of his body
gripped the eyes of all in that hermitage.

For ascetics stood with their wives,
holding the yoke poles in their hands;
and they looked in wonder at him,
who looked like Indra;
they did not move but just stood there
with their heads bowed like yoked oxen.*

And brahmins who had gone out for firewood,
coming with wood, flowers, and sacred grass,
though they were intent on ascetic toil,
though their minds were well trained,
went to see him without going to their huts—

And, necks upturned, as if seeing a dark cloud,
the peacocks, thrilled, burst into song;
and, leaving the grass, these stood facing him—
ascetics keeping the deer-vow,
and the deer with their darting eyes.*

dṛṣṭvā tam Ikṣvāku|kula|pradipam
 jvalantam udyantam iv' āṁśumantam
 kṛte 'pi dohe janita|pramodāḥ
 prasusruvur homa|duhaś ca gāvah.

«kac cid Vasūnām ayam aṣṭamaḥ syāt?
 syād Aśvinor anyataraś cyuto vā?»
 ucceruruccair iti tatra vācas
 tad|darśanād vismaya|jā munīnām.

lekha'|ṛṣabhasy' ēva vapur dvitiyam
 dhām' ēva lokasya car'|ācarasya
 sa dyotayām āsa vanam hi kṛtsnam
 yad|ṛcchayā sūrya iv' āvatīrṇah.

tataḥ sa tair āśramibhir yathāvad
 abhyarcitaś c' opanimantritaś ca
 pratyarcayām dharma|bhṛto babhūva
 svareṇa s'jāmbho|mbo|dhar'|ōpamena.

7.10 kīrṇam tathā puṇya|kṛtā janena
 svarg'|ābhikāmena vimokṣa|kāmaḥ
 tam āśramam so 'nuvacāra dhīras
 tapāmsi citrāṇi nirikṣamāṇah.

tapo|vikārāṁś ca nirikṣya saumyas
 tapo|vane tatra tapo|dhanānām
 tapasvinam kam cid anuvrajantam
 tattvam vijīñāsur idam babhāṣe:

And from the cows that gave ritual milk,
 milk flowed, although they were already milked,
 when they saw that lamp of the Ikshváku race,
 blazing like the rising sun.

The sages living there, when they saw him,
 exclaimed loudly these words of amazement:

“Is he, perhaps, an eighth Vasu?
 Or one of the Ashvins fallen to earth?”*

For, like a second form of the king of the gods,*
 like the light of the mobile and immobile world,
 he lit up that entire forest,
 like the sun perchance come to earth.

Then, those hermits duly paid him homage
 and bade him welcome; and he in return
 paid homage to those bearers of dharma
 in a voice that resembled
 the roar of a thunder cloud.

Steadfast, then, he walked through that hermitage
 filled with men longing for heaven

7.10

and performing good deeds,
 observing the diverse forms of ascetic toil,
 he who was filled with longing for release.

And, as he observed the varieties of ascetic toil
 of men rich in ascetic toil in that ascetic grove,
 wishing to discover the truth, that gentle sage said this
 to an ascetic who was following him:

«tat|pūrvam ady' âśrama|darśanam me
 yasmād imam̄ dharmā|vidhim̄ na jāne,
 tasmād bhavān arhati bhāṣitum̄ me—
 yo niścayo yat prati vah̄ pravṛttah̄.»

tato dviljātiḥ sa tapo|vihāraḥ
 Śākyā|rśabhāya' rśabha|vikramāya
 krameṇa tasmai kathayām̄ cakāra
 tapo|viśeṣāṁs tapasaḥ phalam̄ ca:

«algrāmyam annam̄ salile prarūḍham̄
 parṇāni toyam̄ phala|mūlam eva—
 yath”|āgamam̄ vṛttir iyam̄ munīnām,
 bhinnās tu te te tapasām vikalpāḥ:

7.15 uñchena jīvanti kha|gā iv' ânye,
 trṇāni ke cin mrgavac caranti,
 ke cid bhujaṇ|gaiḥ saha vartayanti
 valmīka|bhūtā vana|mārutena;

aśma|prayatn'|ârjita|vṛttayo 'nye,
 ke cit sva|dant'|âpahat'|ânnā|bhakṣāḥ,
 kṛtvā par'|ârtham̄ śrapaṇam̄ tath” ânye,
 kurvanti kāryam̄ yadi śeṣam asti;

ke cij jala|klinna|jaṭā|kalāpā
 dviḥ pāvakam̄ juhvati mantra|pūrvam,
 mīnaiḥ samam̄ ke cid apo vigāhya
 vasanti kūrm'|ôllikhitaiḥ śarīraiḥ;

"As I have not seen a hermitage till today,
 I do not know this method of dharma;
 So be kind enough to explain to me—
 what is your resolve?
 What do you seek to achieve?"

Then that brahmin delighting in ascetic toil
 explained step by step to that bull of the Shakyas,
 who had the valor of a bull,
 the varieties and rewards of ascetic toil:

"food not grown in a village,
 whatever grows in water,
 leaves and water, fruits and roots—
 according to scriptural texts
 that's the livelihood of a sage;
 there are, however, numerous
 alternative ascetic paths;

some live by gleaning like the birds,
 some, like the deer, subsist on grass,
 others live in the company of snakes,
 turned into anthills by the forest winds;*

7.15

some procure their food by pounding with stones,
 others eat food that's been ground with their teeth,
 some cook for others and if there's some left,
 with that they do take care of their own needs;

some offer oblations twice a day in the fire
 with mantras, their matted hair dripping with water;
 plunging into water, some live among the fish,
 their bodies scored by turtles;

evam|vidhaiḥ kāla|citaīs tapobhiḥ¹
 parair divam yānty, aparair nṛ|lokam;
 duḥkhena mārgeṇa sukham hy upaiti,
 sukham hi dharmasya vadanti mūlam.»

ity evam|ādi dvipad'|ēndra|vatsah
 śrutvā vacas tasya tapo|dhanasya
 a|dr̥ṣṭa|tattvo 'pi na saṃtutoṣa,
 śanair idam c' ātmal|gatam babbhāṣe:

7.20 «duḥkh'|ātmakam n' āika|vidham tapas ca,
 svarga|pradhānam tapasah phalam ca;
 lokāś ca sarve pariṇāmavantah
 sv|alpe śramah khalv ayam āśramāṇām!

priyāṁś ca bandhūn viṣayāṁś ca hitvā
 ye svarga|hetor niyamam caranti,
 te viprayuktāḥ khalu gantu|kāmā
 mahattaram bandhanam eva bhūyah.

kāya|klamair yaś ca tapo|bhidhānaiḥ
 pravṛttim ākāṅksati kāma|hetoḥ
 saṃsāra|doṣān a|parikṣamāṇo,
 duḥkhena so 'nvicchatī duḥkham eva.

trāsaś ca nityam maraṇāt prajānām,
 yatnena c' ēchanti punah|prasūtim;
 satyām pravṛttau niyataś ca martyus,
 tatr' āiva magnā yata eva bhītāḥ.

when such ascetic toil is amassed over time,
 through the higher kind they go to heaven,
 through the lower kind, to the world of men,
 for it's the path of pain that leads to bliss,
 for the root of dharma, they say, is bliss."

The king's son heard this and like orations
 from that man whose wealth was ascetic toil;
 yet, even though he did not know the truth,
 he was not pleased and whispered to himself:

"Pain is basic to the many types of ascetic toil,
 while heaven is the highest reward of ascetic toil;
 And yet, all the worlds are subject to change;
 such toil in hermitages
 only to gain so little!

7.20

They forsake their dear kin and objects of sense
 and for the sake of heaven practice restraint;
 Yet parted from that, they are destined to go
 only to states of bondage even more dire.

When someone seeks continued life
 for pleasure's sake
 through bodily pains that are named ascetic toil,
 Without grasping the evils of samsaric life,
 by means of pain he is seeking nothing but pain.

Creatures are always mortally afraid of death,
 and yet they strenuously seek repeated birth;
 Death is certain where there is active existence;
 creatures wallow in the very thing they most fear.

ih'ârtham eke praviśanti khedam,
 svarg'ârtham anye śramam āpnuvanti;
 sukha'ârtham āśā|kṛpaṇo '|kṛt'ârthaḥ
 pataty an|arthe khalu jīva|lokaḥ.

7.25 na khalv ayam garhita eva yatno
 yo hīnam utsṛjya viśeṣa|gāmī;
 prajñaiḥ samānena pariśraṇena
 kāryam tu tad, yatra punar na kāryam.

śarīra|pīḍā tu yad' iha dharmah
 sukham śarīrasya bhavaty a|dharmah;
 dharmeṇa c' āpnoti sukham paratra
 tasmād a|dharmam phalat' iha dharmah.

yataḥ śarīram manaso vaśena
 pravartate c' āpi nivartate ca,
 yukto damaś cetasa eva tasmāc;
 cittād ṣte kāṣṭha|samam śarīram.

āhāra|śuddhyā yadi puṇyam iṣṭam,
 tasmān mṛgāṇām api puṇyam asti!
 ye c' āpi bāhyāḥ puruṣāḥ phalebhyo
 bhāgy'|āparādhena parāṇ|mukh'ârthaḥ.

duḥkhe 'bhisaṁdhis tv atha puṇya|hetuh,
 sukhe 'pi kāryo nanu so 'bhisaṁdhiḥ;
 atha pramāṇam na sukhe 'bhisaṁdhir
 duḥkhe pramāṇam nanu n' ābhisaṁdhiḥ.

Some take on pain with this world as their end,
 others endure toil with heaven as their end;
 Forlorn in their hope, with bliss as their end,
 these living beings, with their ends unattained,
 only reach a disastrous end.

Not that this effort is totally vile,
7.25
 which seeks the noble, forsaking the base;
 But wise people with the same kind of toil
 ought to attain that state in which
 nothing needs to be done again.

But, if dharma here consists of bodily pain,
 then bodily bliss should be *adhárma*;
 So when by dharma one attains bliss hereafter,
 dharma here bears the fruit of *adharma*!

Because the body acts and ceases from action
 under the control of the mind,
 It is the mind, therefore, that requires to be tamed;
 body without the mind
 is like a piece of wood.

If you seek merit through the purity of food,
 then even by the deer merit should be acquired!
 So also should men excluded from such rewards,
 who, due to some misfortune,
 are bereft of wealth.*

But, if in pain the cause of merit is intent,
 surely, also in pleasure intent should hold good;
 But, if in pleasure the basis is not intent,
 surely, it is not a basis even in pain.

7.30 tath” āiva ye karma|viśuddhi|hetoḥ
 sprśanty apas ‹tīrtham› iti pravṛttāḥ,
 tatr’ āpi toṣo hṛdi kevalo ’yam
 na pāvayiṣyanti hi pāpam āpah.

spṛṣṭam hi yad yad guṇavadbhir ambhas
 tat tat pṛthivyām yadi tīrtham iṣṭam,
 tasmād guṇān eva paraimi tīrtham
 āpas tu nih|saṁśayam āpa eva.»

iti sma tat tad bahulyuktilyuktaṁ
 jagāda c’ āstam ca yayau Vivasvān
 tato havir|dhūma|vivarṇa|vṛkṣam
 tapah|praśāntam sa vanam viveśa,

abhyuddhṛta|prajvalit’|āgni|hotram
 kṛt’|ābhiseka’|ṛṣiljan’|āvakīrn̄am
 jāpya|svan’|ākūjita|deva|koṣṭham
 dharmasya karm’|āntam iva pravṛttam.

kāś cin niśās tatra niśā|kar’|ābhah
 parīksamāṇaś ca tapāṁsy uvāsa;
 sarvam parikṣepya tapaś ca matvā
 tasmāt tapah|kṣetra|talāj jagāma.

7.35 anvavrajann āśramiṇas tatas tam
 tad|rūpa|māhātmya|gatair manobhiḥ,
 deśād an|āryair abhibhūyamānān
 maha”|ṛṣayo dharmam iv’ āpayāntam.

And likewise when they touch water,
thinking it is a sacred ford,*
so as to purify their deeds,
That too just brings joy to the heart,
for water will not cleanse one's sins.

7.30

For, if whatever water touched by virtuous men
is thought to be a sacred ford on earth,
Then I consider virtues alone as the ford;
water is just water without a doubt."

As he made these various points buttressed
by numerous arguments, the sun set;
then, he entered that forest—

with trees darkened by the smoke of fire oblations,
a forest rendered tranquil by ascetic toil,
a forest that was like the workshop of dharma,
and crowded with seers who had just taken
their baths,
with blazing sacred fires being taken out,
and its divine shrines humming with the sound
of the hushed recitation of mantras.

There, probing those austeries, he spent some nights,
he who resembled the moon, maker of the night;
deciding to abandon all austeries,*
he departed from that field of austeries.

Then, the hermits began to follow after him,
their minds drawn by his beauty and his majesty,
as great seers follow after dharma departing
from a land that's overrun by barbarous men.

7.35

tato jaṭā|valkala|cīra|khelāṁs
 tapo|dhanāṁś c' āiva sa tān dadarśa,
 tapāṁsi c' āiṣām anurudhyamānas
 tasthau śive śrīmati vṛkṣa|mūle.

ath' ḍapasṛty' āśrama|vāsinas tam
 manusya|varyam parivārya tasthuḥ;
 vṛddhaś ca teṣām bahu|māna|pūrvam
 kalena sāmnā giram ity uvāca:

«tvayy āgate pūrṇa iv' āśramo 'bhūt,
 sampadyate śūnya iva prayāte;
 tasmād imam n' ârhasi, tāta, hātum
 jijīviṣor deham iv' eṣṭam āyuḥ.

brahma'|ṛṣi|rāja'|ṛṣi|sura'|ṛṣi|juṣṭah
 puṇyah samipe Himavān hi śailah,
 tapāṁsi tāny eva tapo|dhanānāṁ
 yat|saṁnikarsād bahulī bhavanti.

7.40 tīrthāni puṇyāny abhitas tath" āiva
 sopāna|bhūtāni nabhas|talasya
 juṣṭāni dharm'|ātmabhir ātmavadbhir
 deva'|ṛṣibhiś c' āiva maha" |ṛṣibhiś ca.

itaś ca bhūyah kṣamam uttar" āiva
 dik sevitum dharma|viśeṣa|hetoh,
 na tu kṣamam dakṣiṇato budhena
 padam bhaved ekam api prayātum.

Then, he saw those hermits rich in austerities,
with matted hair, wearing garments of bark and grass,
and in deference to their austerities, he stopped
at the foot of a lovely and auspicious tree.

Then, the residents of the hermitage
approached that best of men and stood around;
the oldest addressed him with reverence,
with these kind and conciliatory words:

“When you arrived the hermitage became, as if, full,
now that you have left, it has become, as if, empty;
Therefore, son, you should not leave it,
as life that’s cherished, the body
of a man longing to live.

For nearby stands the holy Himálaya mount,
frequented by seers—brahmin, royal, and divine;
Because it is near, these very austerities
of men rich in austerity are amplified.

All around, likewise, there are sacred fords,
which are true stairways to the heavenly plane,
Visited by seers, both great and divine,
devoted to dharma and self-controlled.

7.40

And from here again it is proper to proceed
only to the northern quarter
to pursue a special dharma;
But it is not proper for a wise man to take
even one step toward the south.*

tapo|vane 'sminn atha niṣ|kriyo vā
 samkīrṇa|dharm'|āpatito '|sucir vā
 dṛṣṭas tvayā yena na te vivatsā,
 tad brūhi, yāvad rucito 'stu vāsaḥ.

ime hi vāñchanti tapah|sahāyam
 tapo|nidhāna|pratimam bhavantam
 vāsas tvayā h' Īndra|samena s'jārdham
 Bṛhaspater abhyuday'|āvahaḥ syāt.»

ity evam ukte sa tapasvi|madhye
 tapasvi|mukhyena manīṣi|mukhyah
 bhava|prañāśaya kṛta|pratijñah
 svam bhāvam antar|gatam ācacakṣe:

7.45 «ṛjvātmanām dharmabhṛtām munīnām
 iṣṭ'|ātithitvāt svaljan'|ōpamānām
 evam|vidhair mām prati bhāvaljātaiḥ
 prītiḥ parā me janitaś ca mānah.

snigdhābhīr ābhīr hrdayam|gamābhīḥ
 samāsataḥ snāta iv' āsmi vāgbhīḥ;
 ratiś ca me dharma|naval|grahasya
 vispanditā tam̄ prati* bhūya eva.

evam pravṛttān bhavataḥ śaranyān
 at'|īva samdarśita|pakṣapātān
 yāsyāmi hitv" ēti mam' āpi duḥkham
 yath" īva bandhūms tyajatas tath" īva.

If, however, you've seen in this ascetic grove
 someone who neglects rites, or is impure,
 Or has fallen into a corrupted dharma,
 for which reason you do not wish to stay,
 report it; so you'd be pleased to dwell here.

For these here desire to have you
 as a companion in ascetic toil,
 you who are the store of ascetic toil;
 For to dwell with you, the equal of Indra,
 will bring success even to Brihas-pati."

So addressed by the chief of the hermits
 amid the hermits, the chief of the wise
 revealed his inner feeling, he who had
 resolved to destroy the rebirth process:

"At such a display of love toward me by these
 upright sages, upholders of dharma,
 Whom, because of their love of hospitality,
 I consider my own kinsfolk,
 I feel honored, and my joy overflows.

7.45

In brief, I am as if bathed by these words,
 full of love and gripping the heart;
 Although in dharma I'm still a novice,
 they double my passion for it.*

The thought of leaving you all thus engaged,
 so hospitable, so kind toward me,
 The thought of leaving you grieves me as much
 as when I first left my own relatives.

svargāya yuṣmākam ayam tu dharmo,
 mam' ābhilāṣas tv alpunaribhavāya;
 asmin vane yena na me vivatsā
 bhinnah pravṛttyā hi nivṛtti|dharmaḥ.

tan n' ā|ratir me na par'|āpacāro
 vanād ito yena parivrajāmi;
 dharme sthitāḥ pūrva|yug'|ānurūpe
 sarve bhavanto hi maha"ṛṣi|kalpāḥ.»

7.50 tato vacah sūnṛtam arthavac ca
 su|slakṣṇam ojasvi ca garvitam ca
 śrutvā kumārasya tapasvinas te
 viśeṣa|yuktam bahu|mānam īyuḥ.

kaś cid dvijas tatra tu bhasma|śayī
 prāṁsuḥ śikhī dārava|cīra|vāsāḥ
 ā|piṅgal'ākṣas tanu|dīrgha|ghoṇāḥ
 kuṇḍ'āika|hasto giram ity uvāca:

«dhīmann, udārah khalu niścayas te
 yas tvam yuvā janmani dṛṣṭa|doṣāḥ;
 svarg'|āpavargau hi vicārya samyag
 yasy' āpavarge matir asti, so 'sti!

But your dharma aims at attaining heaven,
and my desire is to be free from rebirth.
So, I have no wish to live in this forest,
for the dharma of cessation is opposed
to the dharma of continued existence.

The reason, therefore, for my leaving this forest
is not dislike or an offense by another;
For all of you are equal to the great sages,
you who follow a dharma
conforming to the first age.”*

Then, when they had heard those words of the prince,
words that were kind and pregnant with meaning,
so gentle, yet spirited and powerful,
those ascetics paid him special homage.

7.50

But a certain tall brahmin among them,
used to lying on ash, wearing a topknot,
with reddish eyes, wearing a bark garment,
with a thin long nose and a water pot,
made this oration:

“Wise one, your resolve is truly magnificent,
in that, still young, you have seen
the peril of birth;
For, having examined well heaven and release,
one who sets his mind on release,
he alone does truly exist!

yajñais tapobhir niyamaiś ca tais taiḥ
 svargam̄ iyāsanti hi rāgavantah;
 rāgeṇa s'jārdham̄ ripuṇ” ēva yuddhvā
 mokṣam̄ parīpsanti tu sattvavantah.

tad buddhir eṣā yadi niścitā te,
 tūrṇam̄ bhavān gacchatu Vindhya|koṣṭham;
 asau munis tatra vasaty Arādo,
 yo naiṣṭhike śreyasi labdha|cakṣuh.

7.55 tasmād bhavān chroṣyati tattva|mārgam̄,
 satyām̄ rucau saṃpratipatsyate ca;
 yathā tu paśyāmi matis tath” āiṣā,
 tasy’ āpi yāsyaty avadhūya buddhim.

spaṣṭ’|ōcca|ghoṇam̄ vipul’|āyat’|ākṣam̄
 tāmr’|ādhār’|āuṣṭham̄ sita|tīksṇa|daṇḍram
 idam̄ hi vaktram̄ tanu|rakta|jihvam̄
 jñey’|ārṇavam̄ pāsyati kṛtsnam eva.

gambhīratā yā bhavatas tv a|gādhā
 yā diptatā yāni ca lakṣaṇāni,
 ācāryakam̄ prāpsyasi tat pṛthivyām̄
 yan na’ rsibhiḥ pūrvayuge ’py avāptam..»

For men of passion seek to attain heaven
 by various sacrifices, austerities, and restraints;
 Men of spirit, however, yearn for release,
 waging war against passion as against an enemy.

Therefore, if this resolve of yours is firm,
 go quickly then to the Vindhya-koshtha;*
 A sage lives there by the name Aráda,
 who has gained insight into final bliss.

From him you will learn
 the path of the ultimate principles;*
 if that pleases you, you may follow it;
 But as I perceive this resolve of yours,
 you will leave him too, rejecting his view.

7.55

For this face of yours with nose straight and high,
 eyes large and long, and a red lower lip,
 teeth white and sharp,
 and tongue narrow and red,
 Will drink up the entire ocean
 of all that can be known.

Look at your unfathomable profundity,
 your mighty effulgence and the auspicious signs!
 Clearly you'll become on earth the kind of teacher
 that even seers of the first age could not become."

«paramam» iti tato nṛp'ātmajas tam
rsiljanam pratinandya niryayau;
vidhivad anuvidhāya te 'pi tam
praviviśur āśraminās tapo|vanam.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye Tapo|vana|praveśo nāma
saptamahā sargah.

Then, the son of the king said, “Very well,”
bid farewell to those seers, and departed;
the hermits too duly saluted him
and entered the ascetic grove.

Thus ends the seventh canto named “Entering the Ascetic Grove”
of the great poem “Life of the Buddha.”



CANTO 8
LAMENTING IN THE SERAGLIO

8.1 **T**ATAS TURAṄ'âvacaraḥ sa dur|manāś
tathā vanam̄ bhartari nir|mame gate
cakāra yatnam̄ pathi śoka|nigrahe
tath" āpi c' āiv' âśru na tasya cikṣiye.

yam eka|rātreṇa tu bhartur ājñayā
jagāma mārgam̄ saha tena vājinā,
iyāya bhartur viraham̄ vicintayaṁs
tam eva panthānam̄ ahobhir aṣṭabhiḥ.

hayaś ca s'|āujā vicacāra Kanthakas
tatāma bhāvena babhūva nir|madaḥ;
alam̄|kṛtaś c' āpi tath" āiva bhūṣaṇair
abhūd gata|śrīr iva tena varjitah.

nivṛtya c' āiv' ābhimukhas tapo|vanam̄
bhṛṣam̄ jiheṣe karuṇam̄ muhur muhuḥ;
ksudh"|ānvito 'py adhvani śaṣpam ambu vā
yathā purā n' ābhinananda, n' ādade.

8.5 tato vihīnam̄ Kapil'āhvayam̄ puram̄
mah"|ātmanā tena jagadd|hit'|ātmanā
krameṇa tau śūnyam iv' ḍopajagmatur
divā|kareṇ' ēva vinā|kṛtam̄ nabhah.

sa|puṇḍarīkair api śobhitam̄ jalair
alam̄|kṛtam̄ puṣpa|dharair nagair api
tad eva tasy' ḍopavanam̄ van'|ōpamam̄
gata|praharṣair na rarāja nāgaraiḥ.

THEN, AS HIS master entered the forest,
selfless, the steed's groom became despondent;
on the road he tried to suppress his grief,
yet his tears did not cease to flow.

But the road he had traversed along with his horse
in just a single night at his master's command,
that same road took him eight days,
as he mused over his separation from his lord.

And Kánthaka, the powerful horse, walked on;
his spirits were low, his ardor was gone;
though adorned with ornaments as before,
yet without his master he was,
as if, bereft of majesty.

And, turning back and facing the ascetic grove,
he neighed aloud piteously again and again;
although hungry, he did not welcome as before,
or consume, the grass or the water on the path.

Then, in due course the two approached
the city named Kápila that now seemed empty
without that noble man who was dedicated
to the welfare of the world,
like the sky without the sun.

Although adorned with lotus ponds
and festooned with flowering trees,
the same city park with forlorn city folks
did not sparkle, looking more like a jungle.

tato bhramadbhir diśi dīna|mānasair
 anujjvalair bāṣpa|hat' |ēkṣaṇair naraiḥ
 nivāryamāṇāv iva tāv ubhau puraṁ
 śanair apasnātam iv' ābhijagmatuḥ.

niśāmya ca srasta|śarīra|gāmina
 vin" āgatau Śākyā|kula'|rṣabheṇa tau,
 mumoca bāṣpam̄ pathi nāgaro janah
 purā rathe Dāśarather iv' āgate.

atha bruvantah samupeta|manyavo
 janah̄ pathi Chandakam āgat' |āśravah:
 «kva rāja|putrah̄ pura|rāṣṭra|nandano
 hṛtas tvay" âsāv» iti pr̄ṣṭhato 'nvayuh̄.

8.10 tatah̄ sa tān bhaktimato 'bravīj janān:
 «nar'|ēndra|putram̄ na parityajāmy aham,
 rudann aham̄ tena tu nirjane vane
 gr̄ha|stha|veśāś ca visarjitāv» iti.

idam̄ vacas tasya niśamya te janah̄
 «su|duṣ|karam̄ khalv» iti niścayam̄ yayuḥ
 patadd hi jahruḥ salilam̄ na netra|jam̄
 mano nininduś ca phal'|ōttham̄ ātmanah̄.

Then, the two slowly went to the city,
as if they were going to a funeral bath,
hindered as if by men rambling around,
eyes filled with tears, dejected and downcast.

When the townsfolk saw the two return
without that bull of the Shakya race
and walking with their bodies drooping,
they shed tears along the path, as when
long ago the chariot
of Dásharatha returned.*

Then, the people followed behind them
filled with anger, shedding copious tears,
telling Chándaka along the road:

“Where is the king’s son, the joy
of the town and kingdom?
Where have you carried him away?”

Then, he said to those devoted people:

8.10

“I’ve not forsaken the son of the king.
It is he who in the lonely forest
forsook me, as I wept,
and the householder’s garb.”

Hearing these words of his,
the people concluded:

“It was truly a most difficult act!”

for they did not restrain the tears that flowed,
blaming their mind rising from their own fruit.*

ath' ūcur: «ady' āiva viśāma tad vanam,
 gataḥ sa yatra dvipa|rāja|vikramah;
 jījīviṣā n' āsti hi tena no vinā
 yath" ēndriyāṇāṁ vigame śarīriṇām.

idam puram tena vivarjitaṁ vanam
 vanam ca tat tena samanvitam puram
 na śobhate tena hi no vinā puram
 Marutvatā Vṛtra|vadhe yathā divam.»

punah «kumāro vinivṛtta ity» ath' ô
 gav'|āksa|mālāḥ pratipedire 'nganāḥ;
 vivikta|prsthām ca niśāmya vājinam
 punar gav'|āksāṇi pidhāya cukruśuh.

8.15 praviṣṭa|dīksas tu sut'|ōpalabdhaye
 vratena śokena ca khinna|mānasah
 ja(jāpa dev'|āyatane nar'|ādhipas,
 cakāra tās tāś ca yath"|āśayāḥ kriyāḥ.

tataḥ sa bāspa|pratipūrṇa|locanas
 turañ|gam ādāya turaṅgam'|ānugah
 viveśa śok'|ābhihato nṛpa|kṣayam
 yudh" āpinīte ripuṇ" ēva bhartari.

vigāhamānaś ca nar'|ēndra|mandiram
 vilokayann aśru|vahena caksusā
 svareṇa puṣṭena rurāva Kanthako
 janāya duḥkham prativedayann iva.

Then, they declared:

“We shall then go this very day to the forest
 where he with an elephant king’s valor has gone;
 For without that one we have no desire to live,
 like embodied beings when vital organs are gone.

Without him this city is a forest,
 and with him that forest is a city;
 For without him our city does not shine,
 like heaven without Indra
 at the time Vritra was slain.”*

Then, believing that the prince had returned,
 to the rows of windows the women rushed;
 but seeing the horse with its back empty,
 they closed the windows once again and wept.

Undertaking vows to get back his son,
 his mind beleaguered by penance and grief,
 the king muttered mantras in the temple
 and performed various rites as he desired.

8.15

Then, the horse’s groom, his eyes filled with tears,
 taking the horse and overcome with grief,
 went into the residence of the king,
 as if an enemy soldier
 had carried away his lord.

Going deep into the king’s palace,
 looking around with tearful eyes,
 Kánthaka neighed in a loud voice,
 as if he was announcing
 his anguish to the people.

tataḥ kha|gāś ca kṣaya|madya|gocarāḥ
 samīpa|baddhāś tura|gāś ca sat|kṛtāḥ
 hayasya tasya pratisasvanuḥ svanam
 nar'|ēndra|sūnor upayāna|śaṅkināḥ.

janāś ca harṣ'|ātiśayena vañcitā
 jan'|ādhip'|āntah|pura|saṁnikarṣa|gāḥ
 «yathā hayah Kanthaka eṣa heṣate
 dhruvam kumāro viśat' īti» menire.

8.20 ati|praharṣad atha śoka|mūrchitāḥ
 kumāra|saṁdarśana|lola|locanāḥ
 gṛhād viniścakramur āśayā striyah
 śarat|payo|dād iva vidyutaś calāḥ.

vilamba|keśyo malin'|āṁśuk'|āmbarā
 nir|añjanair bāṣpa|hat'|ēkṣaṇair mukhaiḥ
 striyo na rejur mr̄jayā vinā|kṛtā
 div' iva tārā rājanī|kṣay'|ārunāḥ—

a|rakta|tāmraiś caraṇair a|nūpurair
 a|kuṇḍalair ārjava|kandharair mukhaiḥ
 sva|bhāva|pīnair jaghanair a|mehkalair
 a|hāray'|ōktrair muṣitair iva stanaiḥ.

nirīkṣya tā bāṣpa|parīta|locanā
 nir|āśrayam Chandakam aśvam eva ca,
 viṣaṇuṇa|vaktrā rurudur var'|āṅganā
 van'|āntare gāva iva' rṣabha'|ōjjhitāḥ.

Then, the birds living within the palace
and the pampered horses tied up nearby,
thinking that the prince had returned,
echoed that horse's cry.

Those living near the king's seraglio
believed, fooled by the excess of their joy:

"Since this horse Kánthaka is neighing,
The prince, for sure, must be entering!"

Then, the women who had swooned out of grief
rushed with hope from their houses in great joy,
eyes darting to gain a glimpse of the prince,
like streaks of lightning from an autumn cloud.*

8.20

Their hair was hanging loose,
and their fine clothes were soiled,
their faces without makeup, their eyes filled with tears,
their toilet left undone, the women did not shine,
like stars in the sky dimmed at the end of the night—

their feet were without anklets or red dye,
their faces without earrings, with bare necks,
naturally plump hips without girdles,
their breasts seemingly robbed of their pearl strings.

Seeing with tearful eyes just the horse
and Chándaka, without their lord,
those splendid women wept, faces downcast,
like cows abandoned by their bull
in the middle of a forest.

tataḥ sa|bāśpā mahiṣī mahī|pateḥ
 pranaṣṭa|vatsā mahiṣ” īva vatsalā
 pragṛhya bāhū nipapāta Gautamī
 vilola|parṇā kadal” īva kāñcanī.

8.25 hata|tviṣo ’nyāḥ śithil’|âṃsa|bāhavaḥ
 striyo viṣādena vicetanā iva
 na cukruśur, n’ âśru jahur, na śaśvasur,
 na celur, āsur likhitā iva sthitāḥ.

a|dhīram anyāḥ pati|śoka|mūrchitā
 vilocana|prasravaṇair mukhaiḥ striyah
 siśīncire proṣita|candanān stanān
 dharā|dharah̄ prasravaṇair iv’ ôpalān.

mukhaiś ca tāśām nayan’|âmbu|taḍitai
 rarāja tad|rāja|niveśanam̄ tadā
 nav’|âmbu|kāle ’mbu|da|vr̄ṣṭi|taḍitaiḥ
 sravaj|jalais tāmarasair yathā sarah̄.

su|vṛtta|pīn’|âṅgulibhir nir|antarair
 a|bhūṣaṇair gūḍha|sirair var’|âṅganāḥ
 urāṃsi jaghnuḥ kamal’|ôpamaiḥ karaiḥ
 sva|pallavair vāta|calā latā iva.

Then, Gáutami, the chief queen of the king,
 like a kind she-buffalo that has lost her calf,
 eyes filled with tears, fell on the ground
 flinging her arms,
 like a gold plantain-tree with fluttering leaves.

Other women, their luster gone, 8.25
 and their shoulders and arms sagging,
 almost blacked out out of despair;
 they did not wail, they did not weep,
 they did not sigh, they did not stir,
 they looked like shapes in a drawing.

Other women, losing all self-control,
 passing out out of anguish for their lord,
 sprinkled their breasts deprived of sandalwood,
 with cascades from their eyes gushing down their faces,
 as a mountain sprinkles the rocks with its cascades.

At that time the residence of the king,
 with the women's faces battered by tears,
 looked like a lake with lotuses dripping
 with water and battered by the rain from
 the rain clouds at the time of the first rains.

Those exquisite women beat their breasts
 with hands that resembled lotus buds,
 whose fingers touched each other, full and plump,
 whose unadorned fingers revealed no veins,
 like creepers swaying in the wind
 beating themselves with their own tendrils.

kara|prahāra|pracalaiś ca tā babhus
 tath” āpi nāryah sahit’|ōnnataih stanaiḥ,
 van’|ānil’|āghūrṇita|padma|kampitai
 rath’|āṅga|nāmnām mithunair iv’ āpagāḥ.

- 8.30 yathā ca vaksāṃsi karair apīdayaṃs
 tath” āiva vakṣobhir apīdayan karān
 akārayaṃs tatra paras|param vyathāḥ
 kar’|āgra|vakṣāṃsy abalā day”|ālasāḥ.

tatas tu roṣa|pravirakta|locanā
 viśāda|saṃbandhi|kaśaya|gadgadam
 uvāca niśvāsa|calat|payo|dharā
 vigadha|śok’|āśru|dharā Yaśodharā:

«niśi prasuptām a|vaśām vihāya mām
 gataḥ kva sa, Chandaka, man|mano|rathah?
 upāgate ca tvayi Kanthake ca me
 samam gateṣu triṣu kampate manah.

an|āryam a|snigdham a|mitra|karma me
 nr̥śāṃsa kṛtvā, kim ih’ ādyā rodīśi?
 niyaccha bāṣpam! bhava tuṣṭa|mānasō!
 na saṃvadaty aśru ca tac ca karma te!

priyeṇa vaśyena hitena sādhunā
 tvayā sahāyena yath”|ārtha|kāriṇā
 gato ’rya|putro hy a|punar|nivṛttaye!
 ramasva! diṣṭyā sa|phalaḥ śramas tava!

Yet those women, with their breasts close-set and erect
swaying as they beat them with their hands,
 were radiant,

like rivers with pairs of ruddy geese tossed about
by lotuses buffeted by a forest wind.

As they hurt their chests with their hands,
so they hurt their hands with their chests;
the women there, bereft of compassion,
made their hands and their chests hurt each other.

8.30

Then Yasho-dhara spoke up, eyes red with anger,
her voice choking by the bitterness of despair,
and her breasts heaving along with her sighs,
tears streaming due to the depth of her grief:

“Where did he go, Chándaka, the joy of my heart,
leaving me as I slept helpless at night?

As I see you and Kánthaka return,
whereas three had departed,
my heart begins to tremble.

You have done me an unfriendly act,
ignoble and cruel, you heartless man!
So why do you weep here today?

Contain your tears, be of good cheer!
Your tears don’t accord with your deed!

For that noble man went with you, his aide,
loving, loyal, trustworthy, and upright,
always doing what’s appropriate,
Never to return again! Be happy!

By good fortune your toil has produced fruit!

8.35 varam manusyasya vicakṣaṇo ripur,
 na mitram a|prājñam a|yoga|peśalam;
 suhṛd|bruveṇa hy a|vipaścitā tvayā
 kṛtaḥ kulas�' âsyā mahān upaplavaḥ.

imā hi śocyā vyavamukta|bhūṣaṇāḥ
 prasakta|bāṣp'|āvila|rakta|locanāḥ
 sthite 'pi patyau Himavan|mahi|same
 pranaṣṭa|śobhā vidhavā iva striyah.

imāś ca vikṣipta|viṭaṅka|bāhavaḥ
 prasakta|pārāvata|dīrgha|nisvanāḥ
 vinā|kṛtās tena sah' āvarodhanair
 bhṛśam̄ rudant' iva vimāna|pañktayah.

an|artha|kāmo 'sya janasya sarvathā
 turāṇ|gamo 'pi dhruvam eṣa Kanthakah;
 jahāra sarvasvam itas tathā hi me
 jane prasupte niśi ratna|cauravat.

yadā samarthaḥ khalu soḍhum āgatān
 iṣu|prahārāṇ api, kiṁ punaḥ kaśāḥ;
 gataḥ kaśā|pāta|bhayāt katham nv ayam
 śriyam̄ gṛhitvā hṛdayam̄ ca me samam?

8.40 an|ārya|karmā bhṛśam adya heṣate
 nar'|ēndra|dhiṣṇyam̄ pratipūrayann iva;
 yadā tu nirvāhayati sma me priyam̄
 tadā hi mūkas turag'|âdhamo 'bhavat.

It's better for a man to have a prudent foe,
than a foolish friend, skilled in doing
what is unfit;
For calling yourself a friend, you dimwitted man,
you have brought this family to utter ruin.

8.35

It's for these women, surely, we should grieve,
their jewelry cast aside, their eyes
stained and reddened by constant tears;
They are like widows, their splendor erased,
though their husband remains alive,
like the earth or Himalayas.*

And these rows of castles, separated from him,
weep profusely, as if, along with the women,
With soaring turrets for their arms,
sighing deeply through their cuddling doves.

This horse, Kánthaka, it's clear, must always
wish me ill, for like a burglar of gems,
He carried off from here my all,
while people were asleep at night.

When he could withstand even the lash of arrows,
how much more could he the lash of the whip;
Why then did he leave for fear of the whip,
taking my fortune along with my heart?

Given to ignoble deeds, he neighs loud today,
filling up, as it were, the abode of the king;
But when he took away my love,
this vile horse in fact remained mute.

8.40

yadi hy aheśiyata bodhayan janam
 khuraiḥ kṣitau v” āpy akariyata dhvanim
 hanuṣvanam v” ājanisyad uttamam,
 na c’ ābhaviṣyan mama duhkham īdrśam.»

it’ īha devyāḥ paridevit’|āśrayam
 niśamya bāṣpa|grathit’|ākṣaram vacah
 adho|mukhaḥ s’|āśru|kalah kṛt’|āñjalih
 śanair idam Chandaka uttaram jagau:

«vigarhitum n’ ārhasi devi Kanthakam;
 na c’ āpi roṣam mayi kartum arhasi;
 anlāgasau svah samavehi sarvaśo,
 gato nr̄|devah sa hi devi devavat.

aham hi jānann api rāja|śāsanam
 balāt kṛtaḥ kair api daivatair iva
 upānayam tūrṇam imam turan|gamaṇam
 tath” ānvagaccham vigata|śramo ’dhvani.

8.45 vrajann ayam vājī|varo ’pi n’ āsprśan
 mahīm khur’|āgrair vidhṛtair iv’ āntarā;
 tath” āiva daivād iva samyat’|ānano
 hanuṣvanam n’ ākṛta n’ āpy aheṣata.

yato bahir gacchatī pārthiv’|ātmaje
 tad” ābhavad dvāram apāvṛtam svayam
 tamaś ca naiśam ravin” ēva pātitam—
 tato ’pi daivo vidhir esa grhyatām.

For had he neighed waking up the people,
or made a noise on the ground with his hooves,
Or had he made a loud noise with his jaws,
I'd not be enduring this kind of grief."

After listening to these words of the queen,
pregnant with reproach, stammering amidst tears,
Chándaka bowed his head, folded his hands,
and responded slowly, choking with tears:

"Please do not reproach Kánthaka, my queen;
 please do not be angry also with me;
Know that we are completely without blame,
 for that god among men, my queen,
departed like a god.

For even though I knew the king's decree,
I brought this horse quickly, as if coerced
By some god, and likewise along the road
as I followed him I felt no fatigue.

As it galloped, this fine steed did not touch
the ground,
with the tips of his hooves, as it were, bo
Its mouth too was sealed as if by a divine fo
and it did not neigh or make a sound
with its jaws.

8.45

The gate opened on its own
as the king's son departed,
The night's dark was cleaved as if by the sun—
because of this too we must conclude,
this was a divine disposition.

yad a|pramatto 'pi nar'|êndra|śāsanād
 gr̥he pure c' āiva sahasraśo janah
 tadā sa n' âbudhyata nidrayā hṛtas—
 tato 'pi daivo vidhir esa gr̥hyatām.

yataś ca vāso vana|vāsa|saṁmatam
 nisṛṣṭam asmai samaye div'|âukasā
 divi praviddham mukutam ca tadd hṛtam—
 tato 'pi daivo vidhir esa gr̥hyatām.

tad evam āvām, nara|devi, dosato
 na tat|prayātam̄ prati gantum arhasi;
 na kāma|kāro mama, n' āsyā vājinah;
 kr̥t'|ânuyātrah̄ sa hi daivatair gatah.»

8.50 iti prayānam̄ bahu|devam adbhitam̄
 niśamya tās tasya mah”ātmānah̄ striyah̄
 pranaṣṭa|śokā iva vismayam̄ yayur
 manojvaraṁ pravrajānāt tu lebhire.

viśāda|pāriplava|locanā tatah̄
 pranaṣṭa|potā kurar” īva duḥkhitā
 vihāya dhairyam̄ virurāva Gautamī,
 tatāma c' āiv' âśru|mukhī jagāda ca:

Thousands of people in palace and town,
 mindful though they were of the king's decree,
 Succumbed to sleep then and did not wake up—
 because of this too we must conclude,
 this was a divine disposition.

At that time a heavenly being gave to him
 a garment suited for the forest life;
 His head-dress was carried off when tossed
 to the sky—
 because of this too we must conclude,
 this was a divine disposition.*

Therefore, with respect to his departure, my queen,
 please do not think that the two of us are at fault;
 I did not act of my free will, nor did this steed,
 for he went forth in the company of the gods.”

And when the women heard this description
 of the departure of that noble man,
 wondrous and attended by many gods,
 they were amazed, their grief, as if, destroyed,
 but their hearts burned because he had gone forth.

8.50

Then Gáutami, her eyes trembling with despair,
 grieving like an osprey that had lost its chicks,
 lost self-control, wailed aloud, and fainted;
 and, her face covered with tears, she then spoke:

«mah”|ôrmimanto mṛdavo ’sitāḥ śubhāḥ
 pṛthak pṛthaṇ mūla|rūhāḥ samudgatāḥ
 praveritāḥ te bhuvi tasya mūrdhaljā
 nar’|ēndra|maulī|pariveṣṭana|kṣamāḥ.

pralamba|bāhur mṛga|rāja|vikramo
 maha”|rśabh’|āksaḥ kanak’|ōjjvala|dyutih
 viśāla|vakṣā ghana|dundubhi|svanas
 tathā|vidho ’py āśrama|vāsam arhati.

a|bhāginī nūnam iyam vasum|dharā
 tam ārya|karmāṇam an|uttamāṇ patim
 gatas tato ’sau guṇavān hi tā|drśo
 nr|paḥ prajā|bhāgya|guṇaiḥ prasūyate.

8.55 sujāta|jāl’|āvatat’|āṅgulī mṛdū
 nigūḍha|gulphau bisa|puṣpa|komalau
 van’|ānta|bhūmīṁ kathināṁ katham nu tau
 sa|cakra|madhyau caraṇau gamiṣyataḥ.

vimāna|pṛṣṭhe śayan’|āsan’|ōcitam
 mah”|ārha|vastr’|āguru|candan’|ārcitam
 katham nu sīt’|ōṣṇa|jal’|āgameṣu
 tac|charīram ojasvi vane bhaviṣyati?

"Those hairs on his head, soft and black,
 lovely, each growing from its root,
 Full of great locks, curling upwards,
 fit to be wrapped with a royal head-dress—
 have those hairs been thrown on the ground?

With long arms, with the valor of the king of beasts,
 with a broad chest, with the eyes of a mighty bull,
 A voice like thunder,
 glowing with the gleam of gold—
 does such a man deserve
 to live a hermit's life?

Shall this earth, then, not win him as her lord,
 a man who's peerless and of noble deeds,
 now that he has gone from here?
 For it is through the virtues and the good fortune
 of the subjects that such a virtuous king is born.

Those soft feet of his, with lovely webbed toes,
 tender like a flower or lotus fiber,
 With concealed ankles, with wheels on the soles—
 how will they tread on the rough forest ground?

Used to sitting and lying on the palace roof-top,
 bedecked in priceless clothes, aloe,
 and sandal paste—
 How will his mighty body fare in the forest
 in the cold, the heat, and the rain?

kulena sattvena balena varcasā
 śrutena lakṣmyā vayasā ca garvitah
 pradātum ev' âbhycito na yācitur
 katham sa bhikṣām parataś cariṣyati?

śucau sayitvā śayane hiraṇ|maye
 prabodhyamāno niśi tūrya|nisvanaiḥ
 katham bata svapsyati so 'dya me vratī
 paṭ'|âikadeś'|antarite mahī|tale?»

imaṁ pralāpaṁ karuṇaṁ niśamya tā
 bhujaiḥ pariṣvajya paras|param striyah
 vilocanebhyah salilāni tatyajur
 madhūni puṣpebhya iv' ēritā latāḥ.

8.60 tato dharāyām apatad Yaśodharā
 vi|cakravāk" ēva rath'|āṅga|sāhvayā
 śanaiś ca tat tad vilalāpa viklavā
 muhur muhur gadgada|ruddhayā girā:

«sa mām a|nāthām saha|dharma|cāriṇīm
 apāsyā dharmam yadi kartum icchati,
 kuto 'sya dharmah saha|dharma|cāriṇīm
 vinā tapo yaḥ paribhoktum icchati?

śṝnoti nūnam sa na pūrvā|pārthivān
 Mahāsudarśa|prabhṛtīn pitā|mahān
 vanāni patnī|sahitān upeyuṣas,
 tathā hi dharmam mad|ṛte cikīṛṣati.

Distinguished by learning, splendor, and strength,
 lineage, character, majesty, and youth
 Accustomed to giving, not to begging—
 how will he from others beg for almsfood?

Used to sleeping in a clean bed of gold,
 waking at night to the sound of music—
 How will this my ascetic sleep today
 on bare ground covered with one piece of cloth?"

Clasping each other with their arms,
 as they heard this piteous lament,
 the women shed tears from their eyes,
 as creepers when they're shaken drip
 honey from their flower blossoms.

Yasho-dhara fell on the ground,
 then, like a swan without its mate,
 distressed, she softly voiced various laments,
 in a voice stifled by repeated sobs:

"If it is his wish to practice dharma,
 abandoning me without protector,
 forsaking me, his partner in dharma;
 From where can he obtain dharma
 when he desires ascetic toil
 without his partner in dharma?

Perhaps he has not heard of former kings,
 his forefathers like Maha-sudársha,
 who repaired to the forest with their wives;
 For that's the reason why he wants
 to practice dharma without me.

makheṣu vā veda|vidhāna|saṃskṛtau
 na dāmpatī paśyati dīkṣitāv ubhau
 samaṁ bubhukṣū parato 'pi tat|phalam
 tato 'sya jāto mayi dharma|matsarah.

dhruvam sa jānan mama dharma|vallabho
 manah priy'|ērsyā|kalaham muhur mithah
 sukham vibhīr mām apahāya roṣanām
 Mah" |ēndra|loke 'psaraso jighrkṣati.

8.65 iyam tu cintā mama—kīdr̄sam nu tā
 vapur|gunam bibhrati tatra yoṣitaḥ
 vane yad|artham sa tapāmsi tapyate
 śriyam ca hitvā mama bhaktim eva ca?

na khalv iyam svarga|sukhāya me spr̄hā,
 na taj janasy' ātmavato 'pi dur|labham;
 sa tu priyo mām iha vā paratra vā
 katham na jahyād iti me mano|rathah.

a|bhāginī yady aham āyat'|ēkṣaṇam
 śuci|smitam bhartur udīkṣitum mukham
 na manda|bhāgyo 'rhati Rāhulo 'py ayam
 kadā cid aṅke parivartitum pituh!

Perhaps he does not see that in sacrifices
 both husband and wife are consecrated
 and are sanctified by the Vedic rites,
 that the two enjoy the fruits of these rites,
 equally even in the afterlife;

That's the reason why he acts selfishly
 with respect to dharma concerning me.

Surely this lover of dharma must know my mind,
 ever secretly given to
 bickering, jealousy, and love,

That, although I am enraged, he abandons me
 so easily and without fear,
 wishing to win *apsarases*
 in the Great Indra's world.

But this thought does trouble me—what sort of
 bodily splendor do women there have,

8.65

That for the sake of them he would forsake
 royal splendor as well as my love, and
 in the forest practice ascetic toil?

It's not that I envy his heavenly joys;
 they are not hard to obtain
 even for people like me;

But I have just this wish: how can I make
 my beloved not forsake me
 in this life here or in the next?

If it's my lot not to see my lord's face,
 his sweetly smiling face with those long eyes,
 Still this poor Ráhula does not deserve
 never to be rocked in his father's lap!

aho, nr̄śāmsam su|kumāra|varcasah
 su|dāruṇam tasya manasvino manah
 kala|pralāpam dviṣato 'pi harṣaṇam
 śiśum sutam yas tyajat' īdr̄śam bata!

mam' āpi kāmam hṛdayam su|dāruṇam
 śilā|mayaṁ v" āpy a|yaso 'pi vā kṛtam
 a|nāthavac chṛī|rahite sukh'|ōcite
 vanam gate bhartari yan na dīryate..»

8.70 it' īha devī pati|śoka|mūrchitā
 ruroda dadhyau vilalāpa c' ā|sakṛt;
 sva|bhāva|dhīr" āpi hi sā satī śucā
 dhṝtim na sasmāra cakāra n' ô hriyam.

tatas tathā śoka|vilāpa|viklavām
 Yaśodharām prekṣya vasum|dharā|gatām
 mah" |āravindair iva vṛṣṭi|tāditair
 mukhaiḥ sa|bāspair vanitā vicukruśuh.

samāptaljāpyah kṛta|homa|maṅgalō
 nr̄|pas tu dev'|āyatanād viniryayau
 janasya ten' ārta|raveṇa c' āhataś
 cacāla vajra|dhvanin" ēva vāraṇah.

niśāmya ca Chandaka|Kanthakāv ubhau
 sutasya samśrutya ca niścayam sthiram
 papāta śok'|ābhīhato mahī|patih
 Śacī|pater vṛutta iv' ôtsave dhvajah.

O how cruel and extremely hard is this man's heart,
 though his body is gentle and his mind is sharp,
 That he would indeed abandon his infant son,
 sweetly babbling, charming even an enemy!

My heart too must be very hard,
 made perhaps of iron or stone,
 That, bereft of its lord, it does not break,
 when its lord, used to comforts,
 has repaired to the forest
 bereft of royal splendor."

Thus did the queen here, swooning with grief
 for her lord,

8.70

weep, brood, and wail over and over again;
 though by nature steadfast, that good and pure woman
 paid no heed to fortitude and she felt no shame.

Then, seeing Yasho-dhara lying there on the ground,
 and overcome by the lamentation and grief,
 women wailed aloud, their faces dripping with tears,
 looking like large lotuses battered by the rain.

But, having said his mantras and performed
 the oblation and the auspicious rites,
 as the king was going out of the temple,
 he reeled, struck by the wail of the people,
 like an elephant by a thunderclap.

Seeing both Chándaka and Kánthaka,
 and hearing the firm resolve of his son,
 the king fell on the ground, struck down by grief,
 like Indra's flag at the end of the feast.

tato muhūrtam sutāśoka|mohito
janena tuly'ābhijanena dhāritaḥ
nirīksya dṛṣṭyā jala|pūrṇayā hayaṁ
mahī|tala|sthō vilalāpa pārthivah:

8.75 «bahūni kṛtvā samare priyāṇi me
mahat tvayā Kanthaka vipriyam kṛtam;
guṇa|priyo yena vane sa me priyah
priyo 'pi sann a|priyavat praveritah.

tad adya mām vā naya tatra yatra sa,
vraja drutam vā punar enam ānaya;
ṛte hi tasmān mama n' āsti jīvitam
vigāḍha|rogasya sad|auṣadhbād iva.

Suvarṇaniṣṭhīvini mṛtyunā hṛte
su|duṣkaram yan na mamāra Samjayah
aham punar dharmā|ratau sute gate
mumukṣur ātmānam an|ātmavān iva.

vibhor daśa|kṣatra|kṛtaḥ prajāpateḥ
par'|āpara|jñasya Vivasvad|ātmanah
priyeṇa putreṇa satā vinā|kṛtam
katham na muhyed dhi mano Manor api.

Then, fainting briefly with grief for his son,
he was held up by men of equal rank;
and looking at the horse with tearful eyes,
the king cried out still lying upon the ground:

"After doing many favors for me in battle,
you have done me, Kánthaka, a great disfavor;
In that, acting like a foe, though you are a friend,
you have cast off in the forest
my love, the lover of virtue.

8.75

Therefore, either take me today to where he is,
or rush there speedily and bring him back again;
For without him there is no life for me,
as for a gravely ill man
without the right medicine.

Sáñjaya did the impossible when he did not die,
as Suvárna-nishthívin was carried away by death;*
But I, now that my son devoted to dharma has gone,
wish to release my self, like a man
with no self-control.

Manu, the great creator, founder of ten royal lines,
the son of Vivásvat, perceiving the near
and the far—
How could not the mind of even Manu
be bewildered,
if separated from his beloved and virtuous son?

Ajasya rājñas tanayāya dhīmate
 nar'âdhipāy' Ēndra|sakhāya me sprhā,
 gate vanam̄ yas tanaye divam̄ gato
 na mogha|bāspah kṛpaṇam̄ jijīva ha.

- 8.80 pracakṣva me, bhadra, tad āśram'âjiram̄
 hṛtas tvayā yatra sa me jal'âñjaliḥ.
 ime parīpsanti hi tam̄ pipāsavo
 mam' āsavah preta|gatim̄ yiyāsavah.»

iti tanaya|viyoga|jāta|duḥkhah
 kṣiti|sadṛśam̄ sahaljam̄ vihāya dhairyam̄
 Daśaratha iva Rāma|śoka|vaśyo
 bahu vilalāpa nṛ|po vi|samjñā|kalpah.

śruta|vinaya|guṇ'ânvitas tatas tam̄
 mati|sacivah pravayāḥ puro|hitaś ca
 sama|dhṛtam idam ūcatur yathāvan
 na ca paritapta|mukhau na c' âpy a|śokau:

«tyaja, nara|vara, śokam. ehi dhairyam̄.
 ku|dhṛtir iv' ārhasi dhīra n' âśru moktum;
 srājam iva mr̄ditām apāsyā lakṣmīm̄
 bhuvi bahavo nṛ|pā vanāny atīyuḥ.

I envy the king who was Indra's friend,
 the wise son of King Aja;
 When his son went to the forest, he went to heaven,
 without living a miserable life
 and shedding futile tears.*

Point out to me, my dear, where is that hermitage
 to which you have carried off my water-giver?*
 For these lifebreaths of mine thirstily long for him,
 wishing to travel along the path of the dead."

8.80

Thus did the king, grieving at being separated
 from his son,
 give up his innate steadfastness comparable
 to the earth's,
 and utter countless lamentations as if
 he were deranged,
 like Dasha-ratha over Rama, as he succumbed to grief.*

Then, his counselor, endowed with learning
 discipline, and virtue, and his chaplain
 advanced in years, said to him truthfully
 in measured words without forlorn faces,
 and yet not unaffected by sorrow:

"Give up sorrow, O best of men, and be steadfast;
 do not cry, steadfast man,
 like someone who's feeble;
 Casting aside sovereignty like a spoilt garland,
 many kings on earth have repaired to the forest.

api ca niyata esa tasya bhāvah
 smara vacanam tad ṛṣeh pur” Āśitasya
 na hi sa divi na cakra|varti|rājye
 kṣaṇam api vāsayitum sukhena śakyah.

- 8.85 yadi tu, nr̄|vara, kārya eva yatnas
 tvaritam udāhara yāvad atra yāvah,
 bahu|vidham iha yuddham astu tāvat
 tava tanayasya vidheś ca tasya tasya.»

nara|patir atha tau śāśāsa: «tasmād
 drutam ita eva yuvām abhiprayātam!
 na hi mama hr̄dayam prayāti śāntim
 vana|śakuner iva putra|lālasasya.»

«paramam» iti nar'|ēndra|śāsanāt tau
 yayatur amātya|purohitau vanam tat;
 «kr̄tam» iti sa|vadhū|janaḥ sa|dāro
 nr̄|patir api pracakāra śeṣa|kāryam.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye 'ntah|pura|vilāpo nām'
 âṣṭamah sargah.

This resolve of his, moreover, is inevitable;
remember what the seer Ásita foretold long ago;
For one can't make him live happily even a moment
in heaven or in the kingdom of
a World Conqueror.

But, best of men, if we must do this task,
quickly command and we will go to him;
Let a battle then be waged here on many fronts
between your son and the diverse rules
of scripture."

8.85

Then, the king commanded the two of them:

"So set out quickly from this place, you two!
For my heart cannot find peace,
Like a forest bird yearning for its son."

The two said "Yes" and, carrying out the king's decree,
set out to the forest, chaplain and counselor;
And thinking, "The task is done,"
the king, for his part, carried out the remainder
of the rites,
along with his daughters-in-law and wife.

Thus ends the eighth canto named "Lamenting in the Seraglio" of the great poem "Life of the Buddha."



CANTO 9
SEARCH FOR THE PRINCE

9.1

TATAS TADĀ mantri|purohitau tau
 bāspa|pratod'|âbhihatau nṛpena
 viddhau sad|aśvāv iva sarva|yatnāt
 sauhārda|śīghram yayatur vanam tat.

tam āśramam jāta|pariśramau tāv
 upetya kāle sadṛś'|ânuyātrau
 rāja'|rddhim utsṛjya vinīta|ceṣṭāv
 upeyatur Bhārgava|dhiṣṇyam eva.

tau nyāyatas tam pratipūjya vipram
 ten' ārcitau tāv api c' ânurūpam
 kṛt'|āsanau Bhārgavam āsana|sthām
 chittvā kathām ūcatur ātma|kṛtyam:

«śuddh'|âujasah śuddha|viśāla|kīrter
 Ikṣvāku|vamśa|prabhavasya rājñāḥ
 imam janaṁ vettu bhavān adhītam
 śruta|grahe mantra|parigrahe ca.

9.5

tasy' Ēndra|kalpasya Jayanta|kalpaḥ
 putro jarā|mṛtyu|bhayam titīrṣuḥ
 ih' âbhypetaḥ kila tasya hetor;
 āvām upetau bhagavān avaitu.»

THE TWO THEN went to the forest,
 chaplain and counselor,
 spurred on at that time by the king
 with the goad of tears,
 striving hard, like fine steeds prodded with spurs,
 with great dispatch due to their strong friendship.

The two in time with a fitting escort
 reached the hermitage, completely worn out;
 discarding royal pomp, their mien subdued,
 they approached the abode of Bhárgava.*

The two worshipped the brahmin according to rule,
 and he in turn honored them in a fitting way;
 when both they and Bhárgava had taken their seats,
 they cut out the small talk and told him their business:

“The two of us, please know, are appointed
 by the king born in the Ikshváku race,
 whose might is pure, as also his wide fame;
 The one to sustain the sacred scriptures,
 the other to maintain royal counsel.

That king, who’s comparable to Indra,
 has a son similar to Jayánta;
 He came here, we’ve heard, wishing to transcend
 the dangers coming from old age and death;
 know, lord, that we have come because of him.”

tau so 'bravīd: «asti sa dīrgha|bāhuḥ
 prāptah kumāro na tu n' āvabuddhah
 «dharmo 'yam āvartaka» ity avetya
 yātas tv Arāḍ'|ābhimukho mumukṣuḥ.»

tasmāt tatas tāv upalabhyā tattvam
 tam vipram āmantrya tad” āiva sadyah
 khinn’āvakhinnāv iva rāja|bhaktyā
 prasasratus tena yataḥ sa yātaḥ.

yāntau tatas tau mṛjayā vihīnam
 apaśyatām tam vapus” ôjjvalantam
 upopaviṣṭam pathi vṛkṣa|mūle
 sūryam ghan’ābhogam iva praviṣṭam.

yānam vihāy’ ôpayayau tatas tam
 purohito mantra|dhareṇa s’ārdham,
 yathā vana|sthām saha|Vāmadevo
 Rāmam didṛkṣur munir Aurvaśeyah.

9.10 tāv arcayām āsatur arhatas tam
 div’ iva Śukr’Āngirasau Mah”ēndram
 pratyarcayām āsa sa c’ ārhatas tau
 div’ iva Śukr’Āngirasau Mah”ēndrah.

kṛt’ābhyanujñāv abhitas tatas tau
 niṣedatuḥ Śākyā|kula|dhvajasya;
 virejatus tasya ca samnikarṣe
 Punar|Vasū yoga|gatāv iv’ Ēndoh.

To those two he said:

"Yes, the long-armed prince did indeed come here,
young in age but not in intelligence;
But knowing that this dharma leads to rebirth,
he went to see Aráda seeking release."

The two, then, when they learned what had happened
from him,
bade farewell to the brahmin and, although wearied,
yet as if unwearied out of love for their king,
set off immediately to where the prince had gone.

The two, then, as they went along, saw him,
unwashed, yet radiant with innate beauty,
seated by the road underneath a tree,
like the sun within a halo of clouds.

Then, the chaplain together with the counselor,
left the carriage and came up to him, as the sage
Aurvashéya along with Vama-deva did,
wishing to see Rama living in the forest.*

The two paid due homage to him, as in heaven
Shukra and Ángirasa did to Great Indra;
he too paid due homage to them, as in heaven
Great Indra did to Shukra and Ángirasa.*

9.10

The two sat down then, having obtained his consent,
on both sides of that banner of the Shakya race;
and in his presence they shone, like Punar
and Vasu in conjunction with the Moon.*

tam vṛkṣa|mūla|sthām abhijvalantam
 puro|hito rāja|sutam babbhāse,
 yath”|opaviṣṭam divi Pārijāte
 Bṛhaspatih Śakra|sutam Jayantam.

«tvac|choka|śalye hṛday’|āvagādhe
 moham gato bhūmi|tale muhūrtam,
 kumāra, rājā nayan’|āmbu|varṣo
 yat tvām avocat tad idam nibodha:

‘jānāmi dharmam prati niścayam te,
 paraimi te bhāvinam etam artham;
 aham tv a|kāle vanā|saṁśrayāt te
 śok’|āgnin” āgni|pratimena dahye.

9.15 tad ehi, dharmā|priya, mat|priy’|ārtham
 dharm’|ārtham eva tyaja buddhim etām,
 ayam hi mā śoka|rayah pravṛddho
 nadī|rayah kūlam iv’ âbhihanti.

mehg’|āmbu|kaks’|ādriṣu yā hi vṛttiḥ
 samīraṇ’|ārk’|āgni|mah”|āśanīnām
 tām vṛttim asmāsu karoti śoko
 vikarṣan’|ōcchoṣaṇa|dāha|bhedaiḥ.

tad bhuṅksva tāvad vasudh”|ādhipatyam,
 kāle vanam yāsyasi śāstra|drṣṭe;
 an|iṣṭa|bandhau kuru mayy apekṣām
 sarveṣu bhūteṣu dayā hi dharmah.

The chaplain spoke to the son of the king,
as he sat effulgent under the tree;
as in heaven Brihas-pati spoke to Shakra's son,
Jayánta, seated under the Paradise tree.*

"The king fell on the ground for a moment,
his heart struck by the dart of grief for you;
Listen, prince, to what the king said to you,
as streams of tears kept flowing from his eyes:

'I know that you have resolved to follow dharma,
and, I realize, this will be your future goal;
but I am burnt up by this fire, the fire of grief,
for you have gone to the forest at the wrong time.

So, for love of me, come back, lover of dharma,
for the sake of dharma itself, give up this plan,
for this swollen current of my grief assaults me,
like the swollen current of a river its bank.

9.15

For what the wind, sun, fire, and thunderbolt,
do to clouds, water, hay, and to mountains,
the same my grief does to me, by tearing,
by parching, by burning, by shattering.*

So enjoy now lordship of earth, and at the time
the scriptures prescribe you will go to the forest;
show kindness to this unlucky father of yours,
for dharma is compassion toward all creatures.

na c' āiṣa dharmo vana eva siddhaḥ;
 pure 'pi siddhir niyatā yatīnām;
 buddhiś ca yatnaś ca nimittam atra,
 vanam ca liṅgam ca hi bhīru|cihnām.

maulī|dharair aṃsa|viṣakta|hāraiḥ
 keyūra|viṣṭabdha|bhujair nar'|ēndraiḥ
 lakṣmy|aṅka|madhye parivartamānaiḥ
 prāpto gṛha|sthair api mokṣa|dharmāḥ.

9.20 Dhruv'|ānujau yau Bali|Vajrabāhū
 Vaibhrājam Āśāḍham ath' Āntidevam
 Videha|rājam Janakam tath" āiva
 [Śalva]|Drumam Sena|jitaś ca rājñāḥ—

etān gṛha|sthān nṛ|patīn avehi
 naiḥśreyase dharma|vidhau vinītān
 ubhau 'pi* tasmād yugapad bhajasva
 citt'|ādhipatyam* ca nṛpa|śriyam ca.

icchāmi hi tvām upaguhya gāḍham
 kṛt'|ābhisekam salil'|ārdram eva
 dhṛt'|ātapatram samudikṣamānas
 ten' āiva harṣena vanam praveṣṭum.»

And this dharma is achieved not just in forests;
 ascetics do achieve it even in cities;
 in this regard the means are effort and intent;
 forest and emblems are the marks of a coward.*

Kings, even while remaining householders
 cradled in the lap of royal fortune
 crowns upon their heads,
 pearl strings on shoulders,
 arms bound with bracelets,
 have won the dharma of release—

Bali and Vajra-bahu,
 the younger brothers of Dhruva,
 Vaibhrája, Ashádha, and Anti-deva,
 Jánaka, likewise, the king of Vidéha,
 Druma of Shalva and the Sénajit kings—

9.20

Know that these householder kings
 were well trained
 in dharma rules leading to highest bliss;
 therefore, you should enjoy both together,
 lordship over mind and royal fortune.*

For my desire is to hug you closely,
 still wet after your royal anointing,
 to see you with the royal parasol
 held over your head, and with that same joy
 to depart to the forest.'

ity abravīd bhūmi|patir bhavantam
 vākyena bāṣpa|grathit'âkṣareṇa;
 śrutvā bhavān arhati tat|priy'ârtham
 snehena tat|sneham anuprayātum.

śok'âmbhasi tvat|prabhave hy agādhe
 duḥkh'ârṇave majjati Śākyā|rājah;
 tasmāt tam uttāraya nātha|hīnam,
 nir|āśrayam magnam iv' ârṇave nauḥ.

9.25 Bhīṣmeṇa Gaṅg" |ôdara|saṁbhavena
 Rāmeṇa Rāmeṇa ca Bhārgaveṇa
 śrutvā kṛtam karma pituḥ priy'ârtham
 pitus tvam apy arhasi kartum iṣṭam.

saṁvardhayitrīm samavehi devīm
 Agastya|juṣṭām diśam a|prayātām
 pranaṣṭa|vatsām iva vatsalām gām
 ajasram ārtām karuṇām rudantīm.

haṁsena haṁsīm iva viprayuktām,
 tyaktām gajen' ēva vane kareṇum,
 ārtām sa|nāthām api nātha|hīnam
 trātum vadhūm arhasi darśanena.

ekam sutam bālam an|arha|duḥkham
 saṁtāpam antar|gatam udvahantam
 tam Rāhulam moksaya bandhu|śokād
 Rāh'|ūpasargād iva pūrṇa|candram.

So did the king address you with these words,
 pronounced haltingly while choking with tears;
 Hearing that, you should do him this favor:
 return his love for you with your own love.

The Shakya king is sinking in a sea of grief,
 a fathomless sea of sorrow rising from you;
 So, raise him up, who is without a protector,
 as a boat does a man sinking
 in the ocean without a float.

Bhishma, who sprang from the womb of Ganga,
 Rama, and Rama the son of Bhrgu—
 Hearing what they did to please their fathers,
 you too must do what your father desires.*

Know that the queen who brought you up,
 although to Agástya's region she has not gone,*
 The queen is anguished,
 crying piteously all the time,
 like a loving cow that has lost its calf.

Like a pen separated from the cob,
 like an elephant forsaken
 within a forest by her mate,
 Your anguished wife, who is widowed
 although her husband is alive,
 you must rescue her with your sight.

Your only son, so young, not deserving such grief,
 who bears the torment in his heart,
 Rescue Ráhula from the grief for his father,
 like the Full Moon from Rahu's grasp.*

9.25

śok'āgninā tvad|virah'|ēndhanena
 niḥsvāsa|dhūmena tamah|śikhena
 tvad|darśan'|āmbv icchati dāhyamānam
 antah|puram c' āiva puram ca kṛtsnam.»

9.30 sa bodhi|sattvah paripūrṇa|sattvah
 śrutvā vacas tasya purohitasya
 dhyātvā muhūrtam guṇavad guṇa|jñah
 pratyuttaram praśritam ity uvāca:

«avaimi bhāvam tanaye pitṛṇām,
 viśeṣato yo mayi bhūmi|pasya;
 jānann api vyādhil|jarā|vipadbhyo
 bhītas tv algatyā sva|janam tyajāmi.

draṣṭum priyam kah sva|janam hi n' ecchen,
 n' ante yadi syāt priya|viprayogah;
 yadā tu bhūtv" āpi ciram viyogas
 tato gurum snigdham api tyajāmi.

madd|hetukam yat tu nar'|ādhipasya
 śokam bhavān āha, na tat priyam me,
 yat svapna|bhūteṣu samāgamesu
 samṛtapyate bhāvini viprayoge.

evam ca te niścayam etu buddhir
 dr̥ṣṭvā vicitram jagataḥ pracāram:
 samṛtāpaḥ hetur na suto, na bandhur;
 aljñāna|naimittika eṣa tāpah.

The seraglio and the entire city, being burnt up
 by the fire of grief fueled
 by separation from you,
 A fire whose smoke is their sighs,
 and anguish the flames,
 crave for the water of your sight."

The bodhisattva, his spirit completely full,*
 listened to the remarks of the chaplain;
 knowing what is excellent, he thought for a while,
 and gave this excellent and meek reply:

"I recognize the love fathers have for their sons,
 above all the love the king bears for me;
 Although I know it, I'm forced to forsake my kin,
 by the fear of sickness, old age, and death.

If in the end one were not severed from dear ones,
 then who would not wish to see his dear kin;
 But when there's severance even after a long time,
 even my loving father I forsake.

You spoke about the king's grief on account of me;
 I am not pleased that he is so distressed,
 Amidst associations as fleeting as dreams,
 when separation is bound to take place.

And when you see the jumbled process of this world,
 your mind ought to arrive at this verdict:
 The cause of anguish is neither father nor son;
 ignorance is the cause of this anguish.

9.30

9.35 yath”|âdhvagânâm iha saṅgatânâm
 kâle viyogo niyataḥ prajânâm,
 prâjño janah̄ ko nu bhajeta śokam̄
 bandhu|pratijñâtaljanair vihînah̄?

ih’ âiti hitvâ svâjanam̄ paratra
 pralabhya c’ êh’ âpi punah̄ prayâti;
 gatv” âpi tatr’ âpy aparatra gacchaty
 evam̄ Jane tyâgini ko ’nurodhah̄?

yadâ ca garbhât prabhṛti pravîttah̄
 sarvâsv avasthâsu vadhyâya mṛtyuh̄,
 kasmâd a|kâle vanâsaṁśrayam̄ me
 putra|priyas tatra|bhavân avocat?

bhavaty a|kâlo viṣay’|âbhipattau,
 kâlas tath” âiv’ ârtha|vidhau pradiṣṭah̄;
 kâlo jagat karṣati sarva|kâlân
 nirvâhake śreyasi n’ âsti kâlah̄.

râjyam̄ mumukṣur mayi yac ca râjâ,
 tad apy udâram̄ sadṛśam̄ pituś ca;
 pratigrahîtum̄ mama na kṣamam̄ tu
 lobhâd apathy’|ânnam iv’ âturasya.

9.40 katham̄ nu moh’|âyatanaṁ nr̄|patvam̄
 kṣamam̄ prapattum̄ viduṣā nareṇa,
 s’|ôdvegatâ yatra madah̄ śramaś ca
 par’|âpacâreṇa ca dharma|pîdâ?

Parting in due course is as certain for creatures,
as for travelers here who come together;*
What wise man would succumb to grief,
when parted from those called kinsfolk?

9.35

A man comes here forsaking his kin there,
having tricked them here, he departs again;*
Even after going there, he goes elsewhere;
how can you be attached to those,
who constantly abandon you?

From the time a man comes out of the womb
death is set to slay him at every stage;
So how could His Lordship, in his love for his son,
say that I went to the forest at the wrong time?

There is a wrong time to enjoy pleasures,
a time is ordained also for obtaining wealth;
Time tears up this world all the time;
but there's no appointed time
for what procures final bliss.

That the king wants to surrender the realm to me,
that too is noble and befitting my father;
Yet it is not proper for me to accept it,
like a sick man out of greed
consuming unhealthy food.

How can it be right for a wise man to accept
kingship that is delusion's dwelling place,
Where anxiety, pride, and fatigue lurk, and damage
to dharma by mistreating other men?

9.40

jāmbūnadām harmyam iva pradīptām
 viṣeṇa samyuktam iv' ôttam' | ânnam
 grāh' | ākulām c' āmbv iva s' | âravindām
 rājyām hi ramyām vyasan' | āśrayām ca.

itthām ca rājyām na sukham na dharmaḥ
 pūrve yathā jāta|ghṛṇā nar' | ēndrāḥ
 vayah | prakarṣe ' | parihārya | duhkhe
 rājyāni muktvā vanam eva jagmuḥ.

varam hi bhuktāni tṛṇāny aranye
 toṣām param ratnam iv' ḍpaguhya,
 sah' | ḍoṣitaṁ śri|sulabhair na c' āiva
 doṣair a|dṛṣyair iva krṣṇa|sarpaiḥ.

ślāghyām hi rājyāni vihāya rājñām
 dharm' | abhilāṣeṇa vanam praveṣṭum;
 bhagna | pratijñasya na t' ūpapannam
 vanam parityajya gṛham praveṣṭum.

9.45 jātaḥ kule ko hi narah sa|sattvo
 dharm' | abhilāṣeṇa vanam praviṣṭah
 kāṣayam utsṛjya vimukta|lajjhāḥ
 Puraṇḍarasy' āpi puram śrayeta?

lobhādd hi mohād atha vā bhayena
 yo vāntam annam punar ādadīta,
 lobhāt sa mohād atha vā bhayena
 samtyajya kāmān punar ādadīta.

For a kingdom is charming yet full of dangers,
 like a golden castle that is on fire,
 like exquisite food that's mixed with poison,
 like a lotus pond filled with crocodiles.

A kingdom thus provides neither dharma nor joy;
 so when kings of old reached old age
 With its inescapable pains and felt disgust,
 they abandoned their kingdoms,
 and repaired to the forest.

For it is better to eat grass in the forest,
 hiding one's supreme contentment,
 as one would a priceless jewel,
 Than to abide with the latent dangers
 rampant in royal power,
 as with concealed black snakes.

For it's praiseworthy for kings to forsake kingdoms
 and enter the forest aspiring to dharma;
 But it's not fitting for someone to return home,
 abandoning the forest and breaking his vow.

For what man of spirit from a good family,
 who has repaired to the forest seeking dharma,
 Would without any shame discard the ochre robe
 even to take refuge in Indra's citadel?

For, if a man, out of greed, delusion, or fear,
 would take back the food he has vomited,
 That man, indeed, out of greed, delusion, or fear,
 would take back the pleasures he has renounced.

yaś ca pradīptāc charaṇāt katham̄ cin
 niṣkramya bhūyah praviśet tad eva,
 gārhasthyam utsṛjya sa dṛṣṭa|doṣo
 mohena bhūyo 'bhilaṣed grahitum.

yā ca śrutir «mokṣam avāptavanto
 nṛ|pā gr̄ha|sthā iti» n' āitad asti!
 śama|pradhānāḥ kva ca mokṣa|dharmo,
 daṇḍa|pradhānāḥ kva ca rāja|dharmaḥ?

śame ratiś cec, chithilam̄ ca rājyam̄;
 rājye matiś cec, chama|viplavaś ca;
 śamaś ca taikṣṇyam̄ ca hi n' ôpapannam̄
 sīt'|ōṣṇayor aikyam iv' ôdak'|âgnyoh.

9.50 tan niścayād vā vasudh”|ādhipās te
 rājyāni muktvā śamam āptavantah,
 rājy’|āngitā vā nibhṛt’|ēndriyatvād
 a|naiṣṭhike mokṣa|kṛt’|ābhimānāḥ.

teṣām̄ ca rājye ’stu śamo yathāvat,
 prāpto vanam̄ n' āham a|niścayena;
 chittvā hi pāśam̄ gr̄ha|bandhu|samjñam̄
 muktaḥ punar na pravivikṣur asmi.»

Only a man who, after somehow getting out
 of a burning house, would enter it once again,
 Will out of delusion wish to take back again
 the household life that he has given up,
 after he had seen its dangers.

As for the scripture that householder kings
 have attained release,
 that cannot be!

The dharma of release, where calm prevails,
 And the dharma of kings, where force prevails—
 how far apart are they!

If a king delights in calm, his realm falls apart,
 if his mind is on his realm, his calm is destroyed;
 For calmness and fierceness are incompatible,
 like the union of fire and water, heat and cold.

So, certainly, either those kings
 gave up their realms and obtained calm,
 Or remaining within the realm, they projected
 release on a non-final state,
 because their senses were controlled.

9.50

Let's say they duly attained calm within the realm;
 I've not reached the forest with mind undecided;
 For I am free, I've cut the snare called
 home and kin;
 I have no desire to enter that snare again."

ity ātma|vijñāna|guṇ' | ânurūpam
 mukta|spr̥ham hetumad ūrjitam ca
 śrutvā narendr' | âtmajam uktavantam
 pratyuttaram mantra|dharo 'py uvāca:

«yo niścayo dharma|vidhau tav' āyam
 n' āyam na yukto na tu kāla|yuktah;
 śokāya dattvā pitaram vayah|sthām
 syād dharma|kāmasya hi te na dharmah.

nūnam ca buddhis tava n' āti|sūkṣmā
 dharm' |ârtha|kāmeṣv a|vicakṣanā vā
 hetor a|dr̥ṣṭasya phalasya yas tvam
 pratyakṣam artham paribhūya yāsi.

9.55 «punar|bhavo 'st' iti» ca ke cid āhur
 «n' āst' iti» ke cin niyata|pratijñāḥ;
 evam yadā samśayito 'yam arthas
 tasmāt kṣamam bhoktum upasthitā śrīḥ.

bhūyah pravṛttir yadi kā cid asti,
 rāmasyāmahe tatra yath' |ōpapattau;
 atha pravṛttiḥ parato na kā cit
 siddho '|prayatnāj jagato 'sya mokṣaḥ.

«ast' iti» ke cit para|lokam āhur,
 mokṣasya yogam na tu varṇayanti;
 agner yathā hy auṣṇyam apām dravatvam
 tadvat pravṛttau Prakṛtim vadanti.

The prince made this speech, freed from all longings,
spoken with spirit and finely argued,
befitting his self, knowledge, and virtue;
having heard it the counselor replied:

“It is not that this decision of yours
to practice dharma is not right,
just that this is not the right time;
For to condemn your old father to grief
is surely not your dharma,
you who delight in dharma.

Perhaps your mind is not too sharp,
or not conversant with
dharma, wealth, and pleasure;
That you leave to win an unseen result,
disdaining the object before your eyes.

Now, some assert that rebirth does take place,
others deny it with great confidence;
When this matter is thus in doubt, it's right
that you enjoy the sovereignty at hand.

If there is continued existence beyond this,
we will rejoice there in accordance with our birth;
But if there's no existence in the hereafter,
this world will be released without any effort.

Some say that the world beyond does exist,
but they do not teach the path to release;
For Nature's relation to existence,
they say, is like that of heat to fire,
or liquidity to water.

ke cit *sva|bhāvād* iti varṇayanti
 śubh’|āśubham c’ āiva bhav’|ābhavau ca;
 svābhāvikam̄ sarvam idam̄ ca yasmād,
 ato ’pi mogho bhavati prayatnāḥ.

yad indriyāṇām̄ niyataḥ pracāraḥ
 priy’|āpriyatvam viṣayeṣu c’ āiva
 saṃyuṣyate yaj jaray” ārtibhiś ca—
 kas tatra yatno? nanu sa *sva|bhāvah*.

9.60 adbhīr hut’|āśah̄ śamam abhyupaiti,
 tejāṇsi c’ āpo gamayanti śoṣam;
 bhinnāni bhūtāni śarīra|saṃsthāny
 aikyam̄ ca gatvā jagad udvahanti.

yat pāṇipād’|ōdara|prṣṭha|mūrdhnām̄
 nirvartate garbha|gatasya bhāvah̄
 yad ātmanas tasya ca tena yogah̄,
 svābhāvikam̄ tat kathayanti taj|jñāḥ.

kaḥ kaṇṭakasya prakaroti taiksṇyam̄,
 vicitra|bhāvam̄ mṛga|pakṣiṇām̄ vā?
 sva|bhāvataḥ sarvam idam̄ pravṛttam̄;
 na kāma|kāro ’sti, kutaḥ prayatnāḥ?

Some explain that good and evil, existence and non-existence are caused by inherent nature; Because this whole world operates by means of inherent nature, for that reason too effort is useless.

That senses operate in specific confines,
that sensual objects are either pleasing or not,
that people are subject to sickness and old age—
From inherent nature, surely, all that proceeds;
what is the use of effort in all this?

A fire becomes extinguished by water,
whereas water becomes dried up by fire;
Disparate elements based within the body,
when they become united, give rise to the world

9.60

That, entering the womb, it develops
hands, feet, abdomen, back, and head;
That his soul then is united with it—
all this, experts in these matters explain,
is just the work of inherent nature.

Who produces the sharpness of a thorn?
Or the diversity of beasts and birds?
All this happens through inherent nature;
there is no role here for willful action,
how much less for any human effort?

sargam vadant' Íśvaratas tath" ânye;
 tatra prayatne puruṣasya ko 'rthah?
 ya eva hetur jagataḥ pravṛttau,
 hetur nivṛttau niyataḥ sa eva.

ke cid vadanty ātma|nimittam eva
 prāduri|bhavam c' āiva bhava|kṣayam ca;
 prāduri|bhavam tu pravadanty a|yatnād
 yatnena moks'|âdhigamam bruvanti.

9.65 narah pitṛṇām an|rṇaḥ prajābhir
 vedair ṛṣīṇām kratubhiḥ surāṇām;
 utpadyate s'|ārdham ṣṇais tribhis tair;
 yasy' āsti mokṣaḥ, kila tasya mokṣaḥ.

ity evam etena vidhi|krameṇa
 mokṣam sa|yatnasya vadanti taj|jñāḥ;
 prayatnavanto 'pi hi vikramēṇa
 mumukṣavaḥ khedam avāpnuvanti.

tat, saumya, mokṣe yadi bhaktir asti,
 nyāyena sevasva vidhim yath'|ôktam;
 evam bhaviṣyatv upapattir asya
 samṛtāpa|nāśaś ca nar'|âdhipasya.

Others, likewise, proclaim that creation
proceeds from Ishvara; what then*
is the use of human effort?

The very cause of the world's existence
is doubtless the cause of its cessation.

Some say that the self alone is the cause
of beings emerging and ceasing to be;
But, their emergence is without effort,
they say, while release is gained through effort.

A man is released from his debts
to his ancestors through offspring,
to seers through studying the Vedas,
and to the gods through sacrifice;

A man is born with these three debts,
whoever has become released from these,
for him alone, they say, there is release.*

9.65

Release is open to one, experts say,
who strives following this sequence of rules;
Those who desire release violating that sequence,*
only get fatigued though they expend
much effort.

So, my dear, if you are devoted to release,
properly follow the rule I have pointed out;
Thus your release will be achieved,
and the king's grief will be removed.

yā ca pravṛttā tava doṣa|buddhis
 tapo|vanebhyo bhavanam̄ praveṣṭum,
 tatr' āpi cintā tava, tāta, mā bhūt:
 pūrve 'pi jagmuḥ sva|grhān vanebhyaḥ—

tapo|vana|stho 'pi vṛtaḥ prajābhir
 jagāma rājā puram Ambarīṣah;
 tathā mahīm̄ viprakṛtām an|āryais
 tapo|vanād etya rarakṣa Rāmah;

9.70 tath" āiva Śālv'|ādhipatir Drum'|ākhyo
 vanāt sa|sūnur nagaram̄ viveśa;
 brahma'|ṛṣi|bhūtaś ca muner Vasiṣṭhād
 dadhre śriyam̄ Sāṃkṛtir Antidevah.

evam̄|vidhā dharma|yaśah|pradīptā
 vanāni hitvā bhavanāny atīyuḥ;
 tasmān na doṣo 'sti gr̄ham̄ prayātum̄
 tapo|vanād dharma|nimittam eva.»

As to your view that it is wrong
 to return home from the ascetic grove,
 On that too do not be concerned;
 people even in ancient times
 did return home from the forest—

although he resided in an ascetic grove,
 King Ambarísha did return to his city
 when he was petitioned by his subjects;*

Rama returned from the ascetic grove,
 likewise, and protected the earth,
 when it was beset by barbarians;*

the king of Shalvas named Druma,
 likewise, returned to the city
 from the forest along with his sons;*

9.70

Anti-deva also, the Sánkriti,
 who was a brahmin seer,
 accepted royal power
 from the sage Vasíshtha.*

People like these, who blazed with the fame
 of dharma,
 left the forest and returned to their homes;
 When it's for dharma's sake, therefore,
 it is not wrong to return home
 from the ascetic grove.”

tato vacas tasya niśamya mantriṇah
 priyam̄ hitam̄ c' āiva nr̄|pasya cakṣuṣah
 a|nūnam a|vyastam a|saktam a|drutam̄
 dhṛtau sthito rāja|suto 'bravīd vacah:

«ih' āsti n' āst' iti» ya eṣa samśayah
 parasya vākyair na mam' ātra niścayah;
 avetya tattvam̄ tapasā śamena ca
 svayam̄ grahiṣyāmi yad atra niścitam.

na me kṣamam̄ samśaya|jam̄ hi darśanam̄
 grahitum a|vyaktal|paras|par'|āhatam;
 budhaḥ para|pratyayato hi ko vrajej
 jano 'ndhakāre 'ndha iv' āndha|deśikah?

9.75 a|dr̄ṣṭa|tattvasya sato 'pi kim̄ tu me
 śubh'|āśubhe samśayite śubhe matih;
 vr̄th" āpi khedo hi varam̄ śubh'|ātmānah
 sukham̄ na tattve 'pi vigarhit'|ātmānah.

imam̄ tu dr̄ṣtv" āgamam a|vyavasthitam̄
 yad uktam āptais tad avehi sādhv iti;
 prahīṇa|doṣatvam avehi c' āptatām,
 prahīṇa|doṣo hy an|ṛtam̄ na vakṣyati.

The prince listened to these words,
 wholesome and kind,
 of the counselor, who is the king's eye;
 then, firm in his resolve, he gave this reply,
 without deficiency or prolixity,
 without hesitation or rapidity:

"As to the doubt whether rebirth exists or not,
 my judgment will not be based
 on another's words;
 Perceiving the truth by calm and ascetic toil,
 I shall myself render the judgment on this point.

For it is not right that I accept a doctrine,
 obscure and contradictory, produced by doubt;
 For what wise man would follow another's belief,
 like a blind man in the dark, a guide who is blind?

Although I have not seen the truth, 9.75
 yet when there is a doubt between
 what's good and bad I choose the good;
 For better the toil of one seeking the good,
 though it be in vain,
 Than the comfort of one given to evil,
 though it is the truth.

But seeing that these scriptures are unfounded,
 know that what adepts state is what is good;
 And know that adepts are men without faults,
 for men without faults do not tell untruths.

gṛha|praveśam̄ prati yac ca me bhavān
 uvāca Rāma|prabhṛtīn nidarśanam,
 na te pramāṇam; na hi dharma|niścayev
 alam̄ pramāṇāya pariksata|vratāḥ.

tad evam apy eva rāvir mahīm pated
 api sthiratvam̄ Himavān giris tyajet
 a|dr̄ṣṭa|tattvo viśay'|ōnmukh'|ēndriyah
 śrayeya na tv eva gṛhān pṛthag|janah.

aham̄ viśeyam̄ jvalitam̄ hut'|âśanam̄
 na c' â|kṛt'|ārthah praviśeyam̄ ālayam.»
 iti pratijñām̄ sa cakāra garvito
 yath" |ēṣṭam utthāya ca nir|mamo yayau.

9.80 tataḥ sa|bāśpau saciva|dvijāv ubhau
 niśamya tasya sthiram eva niścayam
 viśaṇṇa|vaktrāv anugamya duḥkhitau
 śanair a|gatyā puram eva jagmatuh.

tat|snehād atha nṛ|pateś ca bhaktitas tau
 s'|āpekṣam̄ pratiyayatuś ca tasthatuś ca;
 dur|dharṣam̄ ravim iva dīptam̄ ātma|bhāsā
 tam̄ draṣṭum̄ na hi pathi śekatur, na moktum.

You give the example of Rama and others
 on the question of one's returning home,
 but they have no binding authority;
 For in decisions regarding dharma,
 apostates from vows lack authority.

Therefore, although the sun may fall to earth,
 or Himálaya lose its fixity,
 I'll not return home like a common man,
 whose senses yearn for sensual things,
 and who has not perceived the truth.

I would rather enter a blazing fire,
 than return home without reaching my aim."

Thus did he proudly proclaim his resolve;
 and, according to his wish, he got up
 and went away, free of all selfish thoughts.

Then, hearing that firm decision of his,
 both minister and brahmin followed him,
 tearful and sad, with their faces downcast;
 but not finding any other recourse,
 the two returned slowly to the city.

9.80

The two, because of their love for the prince,
 and due to their devotion to the king,
 now went back anxiously and now stood still;
 for, being unapproachable like the sun,
 and blazing forth with the light of his self,
 they could not on the road gaze upon him,
 and yet they just could not let go of him.

tau jñātum parama|gater gatim tu tasya
pracchannāmś cara|puruṣān chucīn vidhāya
«rājānam priya|suta|lālasam nu gatvā
drakṣyāvah katham» iti jagmatuh katham cit.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye Kumār'ânveṣaṇo nāma
navamaḥ sargah.

The two, then, appointed trustworthy spies
in disguise to find out the path he took,
he who had taken to the highest path;
and thinking,

“How can we go and see the king
pining for his beloved son?”

the two somehow went on their way.

Thus ends the ninth canto named “Search for the Prince”
of the great poem “Life of the Buddha.”



CANTO 10
ENCOUNTER WITH KING SHRENYA

SA RĀJA|VATSAH pṛthu|pīna|vakṣās
 tau havya|mantr'|ādhikṛtau vihāya
 uttīrya Gaṅgāṁ pracalat|taraṅgāṁ
 śrīmad|gṛham Rājagṛham jagāma.

śailaiḥ su|guptam ca vibhūṣitam ca
 dhṛtam ca pūtam ca śivais tap'|ōdaiḥ
 pañc'|ācal'|āṅkam nagaram prapede
 śāntah Svayambhūr iva nāka|prsthām.

gāmbhīryam ojaś ca niśāmya tasya
 vapus ca dīptam puruṣān atītya
 visismaye tatra janas tadānīm
 sthānu|vratasy' ēva Vṛṣa|dhvajasya.

tam preksya yo 'nyena yayau, sa tasthau;
 yas tatra tasthau, pathi so 'nvagacchat;
 drutam yayau yah, sa jagāma dhīram;
 yah kaś cid āste sma, sa c' ôtpapāta.

kaś cit tam ānarca janaḥ karābhyaṁ,
 sat|kṛtya kaś cic chirasā vavande,
 snigdhena kaś cid vacas" ābhyananda,
 n' āinam jagām' ā|pratipūjya kaś cit.

THE PRINCE, whose chest was broad and stout,
left the two who were charged
with rituals and counsel,
crossed the Ganges with its swift waves,
and went to Raja-griha with splendid mansions.

He reached the city marked by the five hills,
well-protected and adorned by the hills,
upheld and cleansed by auspicious hot springs,
calmly, like Svayam-bhu the heavenly crest.*

At that time, seeing his profundity and vigor,
his effulgent body surpassing the human,
like that of the bull-bannered one
who had taken the pillar vow,*
people living there were amazed.

Whoever was going by another way stood still,
whoever was standing on that road followed him,
whoever was going fast began to walk slowly,
whoever was seated sprang up,
upon seeing him.

Some venerated him with folded hands,
some in honoring him bent down their heads,
some greeted him with affectionate words,
no one went by without worshipping him.

tam jihriyuh preksya vicitra|veṣāḥ
 prakīrṇa|vācaḥ pathi maunam īyuh.
 dharmasya sākṣād iva saṃnikarṣe
 na kaś cid a|nyāya|matir babhūva.

anya|kriyāṇām api rāja|mārge
 strīṇām nṛṇām ca bahu|māna|pūrvam
 tam deva|kalpam nara|deva|sūnum
 nirikṣamāṇā na tatarpa dṛṣṭih.

bhruvau lalāṭam mukham īkṣaṇe vā
 vapuh karau vā caraṇau gatim vā—
 yad eva yas tasya dadarśa tatra
 tad eva tasy' ātha babandha cakṣuh.

dṛṣṭvā ca s'|ōrṇa|bhruvam āyat'|ākṣam
 jvalac|charīram śubhal|jāla|hastam
 tam bhikṣu|veṣam kṣiti|pālan'|ārham
 saṃcukṣubhe Rājagṛhasya Lakṣmīḥ.

10.10 Śreṇyo 'tha bhartā Magadh'|ājirasya
 bāhyād vimānād vipulam jan'|āugham
 dadarśa, papraccha ca tasya hetum;
 tatas tam asmai puruṣah ūśāmsa:

Those who were pompously dressed felt ashamed,
 those chattering on the road fell silent
 upon seeing him.

No one had an improper thought,
 as if they were in the presence
 of dharma in visible form.

Men and women on the royal highway,
 although they were busy with other tasks,
 as they looked with great reverence at that
 godlike son of that god of men,
 their gaze was still not satisfied.

Brows, forehead, mouth, or eyes,
 body, hands, feet, or gait—
 whatever part of his a man looked at,
 his eyes then became riveted on that.

The Royal fortune of Raja-griha
 became alarmed when she caught sight of him,
 a curl of hair between his brows,
 a radiant body and long eyes,
 hands that were beautiful and webbed,
 wearing the garb of mendicant,
 but worthy of ruling the world.

Then Shrenya, lord of the Mágadha realm,
 saw throngs of men from his outer palace,
 and inquired about the reason for it;
 then, an official of his informed him:

10.10

«jñānam param vā pṛthivīśriyam vā
 viprair ya ukto ’dhigamisyat’ iti
 sa esa Śāky’lādhipates tanū|jo
 nirikṣyate pravrajito janena.»

Tataḥ śrut’|ârtho manas” āgat’|āsthō
 rājā babhāse puruṣam tam eva:
 «vijñāyatām kva pratigacchat’ iti»
 «tath” êty» ath’ āinam puruso ’nvagacchat.

a|lola|cakṣur yuga|mātra|darśī
 nivṛtta|vāg yantrita|manda|gāmī
 cacāra bhiksām sa tu bhiksū|varyo
 nidhāya gātrāṇi calam ca cetah.

ādāya bhaikṣam ca yath”|ōpapannam
 yayau gireḥ prasravaṇam viviktam
 nyāyena tatr’ abhyavahṛtya c’ āinan
 mahī|dharam Pāṇḍavam āruroha.

10.15 tasminn avau lodhra|van’|ōpagūḍhe
 mayūra|nāda|pratipūrṇa|kuñje
 kāśaya|vāsāḥ sa babhau nr̄|sūryo
 yath” ôdayasy’ ōpari bāla|sūryah.

tatr’ āinam ālokya sa rāja|bhṛtyah
 Śrenyāya rājñe kathayām cakāra;
 samśrutyā rājā sa ca bāhumānyāt
 tatra pratasthe nibhṛt’|ānuyātrah.

“This here is the son of the Shakya king,
 about whom brahmins predicted
 that he’d attain knowledge supreme
 or sovereignty over the earth;
 He has become an itinerant monk,
 and people are looking at him.”

When he heard the reason, then, confidence returned
 to the mind of the king, and he told the same man:

“Find out where he is going.”

The man said, “I will,” and followed the prince.

But, that best of mendicants went begging
 with steady eyes fixed just a yard in front,
 in silence, walking slowly with restraint,
 controlling his limbs and his lively mind.

Taking whatever almsfood he obtained,
 he went to a lonely stream in the hills;
 and, after eating that food as prescribed,
 he climbed up the Pándava hill.

On that hill overspread with *lodhra* groves,
 its thickets alive with cries of peacocks,
 dressed in ochre robe that human sun blazed,
 like the young sun over the eastern hills.

10.15

Spying him there, the officer of the king
 disclosed the matter to Shrenya, the king;
 hearing that, the king set off to that spot
 with a small guard out of respect for him.

sa Pāñḍavam Pāñḍava|tulya|vīryah
 śail'|ōttamam śaila|samāna|varṣmā
 maulī|dharaḥ simha|gatir nr̄|simhaś
 calat|saṭah simha iv' āruroha.

tataḥ sma tasy' ḫpari śringa|bhūtam
 śānt'|ēndriyam paśyati Bodhi|sattvam
 paryāṅkam āsthāya virocāmānam
 śāś'|āṅkam udyantam iv' ābhra|kuñjāt.

taṁ rūpa|lakṣmyā ca śameṇa c' āiva
 dharmasya nirmāṇam iv' ḫpaviṣṭam
 sa|vismayah praśrayavān nar'|ēndraḥ
 Svayambhuvam Śakra iv' ḫpatasthe.

10.20 taṁ nyāyato nyāya|vidām variṣṭham
 sametya papraccha ca dhātu|sāmyam;
 sa c' āpy avocat sadṛṣena sāmnā
 nr̄|pam manah|svāsthyaṁ an|āmayam ca.

tataḥ śucau vāraṇa|karṇa|nile
 śilā|tale samniśasāda rājā;
 upopaviṣ्य' ānumataś ca tasya
 bhāvam vijīñāsur idam babbhāṣe:

«prītiḥ parā me bhavataḥ kulena
 kram'|āgatā c' āiva parīksitā ca;
 jātā vivakṣā; sva|vayo yato me,
 tasmād idam sneha|vaco nibodha.

Equal in valor to the Pándavas,
 with a stature similar to a hill,
 with a lion's gait, with a royal head-dress,
 that man-lion climbed the Pándava, the best
 of hills, like a lion with a bouncing mane.*

Then, atop that hill, like another peak,
 the bodhisattva with his organs stilled,
 he saw sitting cross-legged and shining bright,
 like the moon rising from a clump of clouds.

He sat with calm and resplendent beauty,
 like the image of dharma; with reverence
 and in amazement the king approached him,
 the way Shakra once approached Svayam-bhu.*

According to rule the king approached him,
 who was the best of those who know the rules,
 and inquired about his well-being;
 he too with equal deference asked the king
 about his health and peace of mind.*

10.20

Then, the king sat down upon a clean rock,
 that was as dark as an elephant's ear;
 seated close to him with his permission,
 and wishing to know his mind, the king said:

"I have the strongest friendship with your family,
 an ancestral friendship that has been well tested;*
 Because you are my age, I want to talk to you;
 listen, therefore, to these my affectionate words.

Āditya|pūrvam̄ vipulam̄ kulam̄ te
 navam̄ vayo diptam̄ idam̄ vapuś ca;
 kasmād iyam̄ te matir a|krameṇa
 bhaiksāka ev' ābhīratā, na rājye?

gātram̄ hi te lohita|candan'|ârham̄,
 kāśāya|sam̄śleṣam an|arham etat;
 hastaḥ prajā|pālana|yoga esa,
 bhoktum̄ na c' ârhaḥ para|dattam annam.

10.25 tat, saumya, rājyam̄ yadi paitṛkam̄ tvam̄
 snehāt pitur n' ēchhasi vikramēṇa,
 na ca kramam̄ marṣayitum̄ matis te,
 bhūnḳṣv' ârdham asmad|visayasya sīghram.

evam̄ hi na syāt svaljan'|âvamardah̄
 kāla|kramēṇ' āpi śama|śrayā śrīḥ,
 tasmāt kuruṣva praṇayam̄ mayi tvam̄;
 sadbhiḥ sahīyā hi satām samṛddhiḥ.

atha tv idānīm kula|garvitativād
 asmāsu viśrambha|guṇo na te 'sti,
 vyūḍhāny anīkāni vigāhya bāṇair
 mayā sahāyena parān jigīṣa.

Your family is mighty, rising from the sun,
 you are young in age, and your body is radiant;
 Why then did you resolve,
 quite against the sequence,
 to follow the mendicant life and not kingship?*

For your body is worthy of red sandal paste,
 not contact with an ochre robe;
 This hand of yours is fit to govern the people,
 and deserves not to take food given by others.

If, therefore, my dear, because you love your father,
 you do not desire to take your father's kingdom
 in violation of the proper sequence,
 And cannot bear to wait for the proper sequence,
 then quickly take a half of my kingdom.

10.25

In this way you will not hurt your kinsfolk,
 and sovereignty also will come to you
 peacefully and in the proper sequence;
 Please do this kind favor for me, therefore,
 for association with the virtuous
 makes the virtuous prosper.

Or if out of family pride
 you will not place your trust in me,
 Charge into the battle lines with arrows,
 and, with me as ally, vanquish your foes.

tad buddhim atr' ânyatarām vṛṇīṣva;
 dharm'|ârtha|kāmān vidhivad bhajasva;
 vyatyasya rāgād iha hi tri|vargam
 prety' ēha ca bhramśam avāpnuvanti.

yo hy artha|dharmau paripīḍya kāmaḥ
 syād, dharma|kāmau paribhūya c' ârthah,
 kām'|ârthayoś c' ôparamēṇa dharmas
 tyājyah sa kr̄tsno, yadi kāṅksito 'rthah.

10.30 tasmāt tri|vargasya niṣevanēna
 tvam rūpam etat sa|phalam kuruṣva;
 dharm'|ârtha|kām'|âdhigamaṇ hy an|ūnam
 nṛṇām an|ūnam puruṣ'ârtham āhuḥ.

tan niṣ|phalau n' ârhasi kartum etau
 pīnau bhujau cāpa|vikarṣaṇ'ârhau
 Māndhātṛvaj jetum imau hi yogyau
 lokān api trīn iha, kiṁ punar gām!

sneheṇa khalv etad aham bravīmi
 n' āīsvarya|rāgeṇa na vismayena;
 imam hi dr̄ṣṭvā tava bhikṣu|veṣam
 jāt'ânukampo 'smy api c' āgat'âśruḥ.

Choose, therefore, any one of these options;
 devote yourself as prescribed
 to dharma, wealth, and pleasure;
 For by inverting here the triple set
 through passion one goes to ruin
 here and in the hereafter.

For when pleasure impairs wealth and dharma,
 when wealth suppresses dharma and pleasure,
 Or when dharma wipes out pleasure and wealth,
 one should abandon the odd one out,
 if one wishes
 to attain the goal in its entirety.

By pursuing, therefore, the triple set,
 make this lovely body of yours bear fruit;
 For when a man gains in their entirety
 dharma, wealth, and pleasure, they say
 he has achieved the purpose of
 human life in its entirety.

So, it's not right that you should let
 these two stout arms
 fit for drawing a bow remain unproductive;
 For, like Mandhátri, they have the capacity
 to conquer all the three worlds,
 how much more this earth?

It's out of love that I say this to you,
 not out of pride or through lust for lordship;
 For seeing this mendicant garb of yours,
 I am moved to compassion,
 and tears well up in my eyes.

yāvat sva|vamśa|pratirūpa|rūpam
 na te jar” ābhety abhibhūya bhūyah,
 tad bhuṅksva, bhiks”|āśrama|kāma, kāmān;
 kāle ‘si kartā, priya|dharma, dharmam.

śaknoti jīrṇah khalu dharmam āptum,
 kām’|ōpabhogeṣv a|gatir jarāyāḥ;
 ataś ca yūnah kathayanti kāmān,
 madhyasya vittam, sthavirasya dharmam.

10.35 dharmasya c’ ārthasya ca jīvalloke
 prathyarthi|bhūtāni hi yauvanāni;
 samṛaksyamāṇāny api dur|grahāṇi
 kāmā yatas tena pathā haranti.

vayāmsi jīrṇāni vimarśavanti
 dhīrāṇy avasthāna|parāyanāni;
 alpena yatnena śam’ātmakāni
 bhavanty a|gaty” āiva ca lajjayā ca.

ataś ca lolam viṣaya|pradhānam
 pramattam a|kṣāntam a|dīrgha|darśi
 bahu|cchalam yauvanam abhyatītya
 nistīrya kāntāram iv’ āśvasanti.

tasmād a|dhīram capala|pramādi
 navam vayas tāvad idam vyapaitu;
 kāmasya pūrvam hi vayah śaravyam
 na śakyate rakṣitum indriyebhyah.

Before old age, therefore, overtakes you,
 ruining the beauty that befits your line,
 Enjoy pleasures, you who take pleasure in
 the mendicant order of life;
 In time you will practice dharma,
 you who find delight in dharma.

Surely, when you are old you can practice dharma,
 old age lacks capacity to enjoy pleasures;
 And, therefore, they assign pleasure for youth,
 wealth for the middle-aged,
 and dharma for the old.

For the time of youth in this human world
 is the enemy of dharma and wealth;
 Though well guarded, youth is hard to secure,
 as by that path pleasures carry it off.

Old age is resolute, given to reflection,
 and intent on stability;
 It attains tranquility with little effort,
 because of shame and impotence.

When people have crossed beyond youth,
 restless, rash, impatient, and short-sighted,
 given to deceit, to pleasures of sense,
 They breathe a deep sigh of relief,
 as when they have crossed a desert.

So, let this fickle time of youth pass by,
 it is indecisive and negligent;
 For the early years are Kama's target,
 they cannot be guarded from the senses.

ath' ô cikīrṣā tava dharma eva,
 yajasva yajñam kula|dharma eṣah;
 yajñair adhiṣṭhāya hi nāka|prṣṭham
 yayau Marutvān api nāka|prṣṭham.

10.40 suvarṇa|keyūra|vidaṣṭa|bāhavo
 maṇi|pradīp'|ōjjvala|citra|maulayah
 nṛpa'|ṛṣayas tām hi gatim gatā makhaiḥ
 śrameṇa yām eva maha”|ṛṣayo yayuh..»

ity evam Magadha|patir vaco babhāṣe
 yaḥ samyag Valabhid iva bruvan babhāse;
 tac chrutvā na sa vicacāla rāja|sūnuḥ
 Kailāso girir iva n'|āika|citra|sānuḥ.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye 'śva|ghoṣa|krte
 Śreṇy'|ābhigamano nāma daśamaḥ sargah.

But if what you want to practice is just dharma,
 make sacrificial offerings,
 which is your family dharma;
 For having stepped on heaven's crest
 through sacrifice,
 even Marútvat attained the crest of heaven.*

For the royal sages have attained the same state,
 their arms bound with golden armlets,
 Their head-dresses radiant with the glitter of gems,
 that the great sages attained through ascetic toil.”

10.40

In this manner did the king of Mágadha speak,
 shining like Válabhid as he fittingly spoke;
 when he heard that, the son of the king did not sway,
 like mount Kailásá with its many sparkling peaks.

Thus ends the tenth canto named “Encounter with
 King Shrenya” of the great poem “Life of the Buddha”
 composed by Ashva·ghosha.



CANTO II
CONDEMNATION OF PASSION

11.1

A TH' ĀIVAM|UKTO Magadh'|âdhipena
 suhṛṇ|mukhena pratikūlam artham,
 sva|sthō 'vikārah kula|śauca|śuddhaḥ
 Śauddhodanir vākyam idam jagāda:

«n' āścaryam etad bhavato vidhānam
 jātasya Haryaṅka|kule viśale
 yan mitra|pakṣe tava, mitra|kāma,
 syād vṛttir eṣā pariśuddha|vṛtteḥ.

a|satsu maitrī sva|kul'|ânuvṛttā
 na tiṣṭhati, śrīr iva viklavesu;
 pūrvaiḥ kṛtām prīti|paramparābhis
 tām eva santas tu vivardhayanti.

ye c' ārtha|kṛcchreṣu bhavanti loke
 samāna|kāryāḥ su|hṛdām manusyāḥ,
 mitrāṇi tān' iti paraimi buddhyā;
 sva|sthasya vṛddhiṣv iha ko hi na syā?

11.5

evam ca ye dravyam avāpya loke
 mitreṣu dharme ca niyojayanti,
 avāpta|sārāṇi dhanāni teṣām
 bhraṣṭāni n' ânte janayanti tāpam.

Now, WHEN THE Mágadha king had said this,
harmful advice beneath his friendly face,
the son of Shuddhódana said to him,
while he remained tranquil and unperturbed,
made pure by his family purity:

“This your arrangement causes no surprise,
that you should behave thus toward your friend;
Born in the illustrious Haryánka line,*
you are pure in conduct,
devoted to your friends.

Ancestral friendships don’t last among evil men,
as sovereign power lasts not among timid men;
But a friendship established by their ancestors,
good men enhance through a series
of friendly acts.

When their friends are in dire straits in this world,
men who continue to share the same tasks,
I deem them in my heart to be true friends;
who will not befriend a man,
prosperous and in good health?

Thus, when people obtain wealth in this world,
and use it for their friends and for dharma,
They obtain the full value of their wealth,
and if, in the end, it is lost,
it causes no remorse.

su|hṛttayā c āryatayā ca, rājan,
 khalv eṣa yo mām̄ prati niścayas te;
 atr' ānunesyāmi su|hṛttay" âiva
 brūyām̄ aham̄ n' ottaram anyad atra.

aham̄ jarā|mṛtyu|bhayaṁ viditvā
 mumukṣayā dharmam imam̄ prapannaḥ
 bandhūn priyān aśru|mukhān vihāya
 prāg eva kāmān aśubhasya hetūn.

n' āśivisēbhyo hi tathā bibhemi,
 n' āiv' āśanibhyo gaganāc cyutebhyah,
 na pāvakebhyo 'nila|saṁhitebhyo,
 yathā bhayaṁ me viśayebhya eva.

kāmā hy aṇityāḥ kuśal' |ārtha|caurā
 riktāś ca māyā|sadrśāś ca loke;
 āśāsyamānā api mohayanti
 cittam̄ nrñām̄, kiṁ punar ātma|saṁsthāḥ?

11.10 kām' |ābhībhūtā hi na yānti śarma
 tri|piṣṭape, kiṁ bata martya|loke;
 kāmaiḥ sa|trṣṇasya hi n' āsti tṛptir,
 yath" ēndhanair vāta|sakhasya vahneḥ.

jagaty an|artho na samo 'sti kāmair,
 mohāc ca teṣv eva janaḥ prasaktah;
 tattvam̄ viditv" āivam an|arthā|bhīruḥ
 prājñāḥ svayam̄ ko 'bhilaṣed an|artham?

It's from friendship, surely, and your noble nature,
 that you made, O king, this decision about me;
 It's with friendship that I will gratify you here,
 on this I'll not give you a different answer.

When I realized the danger of old age and death,
 I took to this dharma seeking release,
 Forsaking my beloved kinsmen as they wept,
 how much more, then, pleasures that cause evil.

For I have no fear of venomous snakes,
 or even of bolts falling from the sky,
 Or of fires that are whipped up by the wind,
 as much as I fear the objects of sense.

For pleasures are fleeting, robbing wealth and virtue,
 they are empty, like phantoms in this world;
 Even when wished for,
 they delude the minds of men;
 how much more when actually possessed?

For men overwhelmed by pleasures find no relief
 in triple heaven, much less in this mortal world;
 For pleasures do not sate a man full of desires,
 as firewood a fire accompanied by the wind.

11.10

There is no evil equal to pleasures
 in the world, yet it's to them that people
 are attached through delusion;
 Knowing that this is the truth,
 what wise man who fears evil
 will on his own yearn for evil?

samudra|vastrām api gām avāpya
 pāram jīgīsanti mah”|ârṇavasya;
 lokasya kāmair na vitṛptir asti
 patadbhir ambhobhir iv’ ârṇavasya.

devena vr̄ṣṭe ’pi hiranya|varṣe
 dvīpān samagrāmś caturo ’pi jitvā
 īakrasya c’ ârdh’|āsanam apy avāpya,
 Māndhātūr āśid viṣayev a|trptih.

bhuktv” āpi rājyam̄ divi devatānām̄
 Šatakratau Vṛtra|bhayāt pranaṣṭe
 darpān maha”|ṛṣin̄ api vāhayitvā
 kāmeṣv a|trpto Nahuṣah̄ papāta.

11.15 Aiḍaś ca rājā tri|divam̄ vigāhya
 nītv” āpi devīm̄ vaśam̄ Urvaśīm̄ tām,
 lobhād ṣibhyah̄ kanakam̄ jihīṣur
 jagāma nāśam̄ viṣayev a|trptaḥ.

Though they have won the earth
 girded by the ocean,
 they wish to conquer
 what's beyond the great ocean;
 Men are not sated by gaining pleasures,
 as the great ocean by rushing waters.

Although the heavens rained down gold for him,
 although he conquered all four continents,
 and although he won half of Shakra's throne,
 Yet Mandhátri's craving for sense objects
 remained unappeased.

Although he enjoyed kingship over gods in heaven,
 when Indra absconded from his fear of Vritra,
 and through pride made even the great seers
 carry him,
 Yet Náhusa fell, while his craving for pleasures
 remained unappeased.*

Although King Aida conquered the triple heaven,
 even brought goddess Úrvashi into his power,
 Yet through greed he desired to seize
 gold from the seers,
 and came to ruin while his craving
 for sense objects
 remained unappeased.*

11.15

Baler Mah”|Êndram Nahuşam̄ Mah”|Êndrād
 Indram̄ punar ye Nahuşād upeyuh;
 svarge kṣitau vā viṣayeṣu teṣu
 ko viśvased bhāgya|kul’|ākuleṣu?

cīr’|āmbarā mūla|phal’|āmbu|bhakṣā
 jaṭā vahanto ’pi bhujaṅga|dirghāḥ
 yaīr n’ ânya|kāryā munayo ’pi bhagnāḥ,
 kah̄ kāma|samjñān mrgayeta śatrūn?

Ugrāyudhaś c’ ôgra|dhṛt’|āyudho ’pi
 yeṣām̄ kṛte mr̄tyum avāpa Bhīṣmāt;
 cint” āpi teṣām aśivā vadhyā
 sad|vṛttinām̄, kiṁ punar a|vratānām?

āsvādam alpam̄ viṣayeṣu matvā
 samyojan’|ōtkarṣam a|trptim eva
 sadbhyaś ca garhām̄ niyatam̄ ca pāpam̄;
 kah̄ kāma|samjñām̄ viṣam ādadīta?

11.20 kṛṣy|ādibhiḥ karmabhir arditānām̄
 kām’|ātmakānām̄ ca niśamya duḥkham
 svāsthyaṁ ca kāmeṣv a|kutūhalānām̄
 kāmān vihātum̄ kṣamam̄ ātmavadbhiḥ.

In heaven or earth, who would put his trust
 in this sensual realm that is subject
 to the ups and downs of fate,
 A realm that passed from Bali to Great Indra,
 from Great Indra to Náhusha,
 and from Náhusha back again to Indra?*

Who would seek the enemies called pleasures,
 by whom even the sages were vanquished,
 Sages who were withdrawn from other tasks,
 subsisting on water, fruits, and roots,
 wearing bark and even dreadlocks
 that were as long as snakes?

For their sake did Ugráyudha,
 though armed with a dreadful weapon,
 perish at the hands of Bhishma;*
 Their very thought is unlucky and leads to death
 even the virtuous, how much more
 then those who are non-observant?

Who'd drink the poison called pleasures,
 knowing that in objects of sense
 The taste is trivial, the bondage is great,
 and there is no satisfaction?
 They invite the disdain of good people;
 the resultant sin is certain.

Hearing about the sorrow of passionate men
 harassed by the labor of tillage and the like,
 And the content of those indifferent to pleasures,
 it behooves self-possessed men
 to relinquish pleasures.

jñeyā vipat kāmini kāma|saṁpat,
 siddheṣu kāmeṣu madam̄ hy upaiti;
 madād a|kāryam̄ kurute, na kāryam̄,
 yena kṣato dur|gatim abhyupaiti.

yatnena labdhāḥ parirakṣitāś ca
 ye vipralabhya pratiyānti bhūyah,
 teṣv ātmavān yācitak'|ōpameṣu
 kāmeṣu vidvān iha ko rameta?

anviṣya c' ādāya ca jāta|tarṣā
 yān a|tyajantah pariyyānti duḥkham
 loke tṛṇ'|olkā|sadr̄šeṣu teṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy' ātmavato ratih syāt?

an|ātmavanto hṛdi yair vidasṭā
 vināśam archanti na yānti śarma.
 kruddh'|ōgra|sarpa|pratimesu teṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy' ātmavato ratih syāt?

11.25 asthi kṣudh”|ārtā iva sārameyā
 bhuktv” āpi yān n' āiva bhavanti tṛptāḥ,
 jīrṇ'|āsthī|kaṅkāla|sameṣu teṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy' ātmavato ratih syāt?

Being fortunate in pleasures should be viewed
 as a misfortune for men of passion,
 for attainment of pleasures leads to pride,
 Pride makes them do what's wrong
 and not what's right,
 and when they are struck down by that,
 they come to an unhappy end.

What man here, who's self-possessed and wise,
 would delight in pleasures,
 arduously attained and well protected,
 Pleasures that cheat you and leave you again,
 much like something received on loan?

What man who's self-possessed
 would delight in pleasures,
 that are like torches of straw in this world?
 When pursued and grasped, they excite craving,
 but when left unabandoned lead to grief.

What man who's self-possessed
 would delight in pleasures,
 that are like snakes, fierce and enraged?
 Stung by them on the heart,
 men who aren't self-possessed
 go to their death and obtain no relief.

What man who's self-possessed
 would delight in pleasures,
 that are like a skeleton of dry bones?
 Even when enjoyed, men get no satisfaction,
 like a famished dog that's eating a bone.

ye rāja|caur' |ôdaka|pāvakebhyaḥ
 sādhāraṇatvāj janayanti duḥkham,
 teṣu praviddh' |āmiṣa|saṁnibheṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy' ātmavato ratih syāt?

yatra sthitānām abhito vipattiḥ
 śatrod sakāśād api bāndhavebhyaḥ,
 himsreṣu teṣv āyatan' |ōpameṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy' ātmavato ratih syāt?

girau vane c' āpsu ca sāgare ca
 yān bhramśam archanti vilaṅghamānāḥ,
 teṣu druma|prāgra|phal' |ōpameṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy' ātmavato ratih syāt?

tīvraiḥ prayatnair vividhair avāptāḥ
 kṣaṇena ye nāśam iha prayānti,
 svapn' |ōpabhoga|pratimeṣu teṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy' ātmavato ratih syāt?

11.30 yān arjayitv" āpi na yānti śarma
 vivardhayitvā paripālayitvā,
 aṅgāra|karṣū|pratimeṣu teṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy' ātmavato ratih syāt?

What man who's self-possessed
 would delight in pleasures,
 that are like a raw-flesh bait being thrown down?
 Because they're like a king, a thief, water, and fire,
 pleasures only give rise to suffering.

What man who's self-possessed
 would delight in pleasures,
 that are like dangerous habitations?
 Those dwelling in them face misfortunes
 from all sides,
 at the hands of enemies and kinsfolk.

What man who's self-possessed
 would delight in pleasures,
 that are like fruits at the top of a tree?
 People leap up at them and come to utter ruin,
 in mountains, forests, rivers, and oceans.

What man who's self-possessed
 would delight in pleasures,
 that are like delights enjoyed in a dream?
 Although acquired with painful and diverse efforts,
 pleasures are destroyed here in an instant.

What man who's self-possessed
 would delight in pleasures,
 that are like trenches filled with burning coals?
 Although they are secured, enhanced, and protected,
 people do not find relief in pleasures.

vināśam īyuḥ Kuravo yad|artham
 Vṛṣṇy|Andhakā Mekhala|Daṇḍakāś ca.
 sūn”|āsi|kāṣṭha|pratimeṣu teṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy’ ātmavato ratih syāt?

Sund’|Ōpasundāv asurau yad|artham
 anyo’nyā|vaira|prasṛtau vinaṣṭau,
 sauhārda|viśleṣa|kareṣu teṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy’ ātmavato ratih syāt?

yeṣām kṛte vāriṇī pāvake ca
 kravy’|âtsu c’ ātmānam ih’ ôtsṛjanti,
 sapatna|bhūtesv a|śiveṣu teṣu
 kāmeṣu kasy’ ātmavato ratih syāt?

kām’|ārtham aljñah kṛpaṇam karoti,
 prāpnoti duḥkham vadha|bandhanādi;
 kām’|ārtham āsā|kṛpaṇas tapasvī
 mr̥tyum śramam c’ ârchatī jīva|lokaḥ.

11.35 gītair hriyante hi mrgā vadhyā;
 rūp’|ārtham agnau śalabhāḥ patanti;
 matsyo giraty āyasam āmiś’|ārthī;
 tasmād an|artham viṣayāḥ phalanti.

What man who's self-possessed
would delight in pleasures,
that are like the wood and knives
of a slaughter house?

For their sake the Kurus went to their destruction,
as also Vrishni-Ándhakas
and the Mékhala-Dándakas.*

What man who's self-possessed
would delight in pleasures,
that tend only to split apart friendships?

For their sake demons Sunda and Upasúnda
hated each other and were thus destroyed.*

What man who's self-possessed
would delight in pleasures,
that are, in fact, sinister enemies?

For their sake people here deliver their bodies
to water, fire, and predatory beasts.

For pleasure's sake ignorant men do wretched things,
incur sufferings such as jail and death;

For pleasure's sake mankind endures
both toil and death,
tormented and made wretched by yearning.

For deer are lured by songs to their death;
moths fall into the fire lured by its charm;
Fish swallow the hook, greedy for the bait;
objects of sense, therefore, bring misfortune.

«kāmās tu bhogā» iti yan|matih syād
 bhogā na ke cit pariganyamānāḥ;
 vastr’|ādayo dravya|guṇā hi loke
 duḥkha|pratikāra iti pradhāryāḥ.

iṣṭam hi tarṣa|praśamāya toyam,
 kṣun|nāśa|hetor aśanam tath” āiva,
 vāt’|ātap’|āmbv|āvaraṇāya veśma,
 kaupīna|śit’|āvaraṇāya vāsah,
 nidrā|vighātāya tath” āiva śayyā,
 yānam tath” ādhva|śrama|nāśanāya,
 tath” aśanam sthāna|vinodanāya,
 snānam mr̄j”|ārogya|bal’|āśrayāya.

duḥkha|pratikāra|nimitta|bhūtās
 tasmāt prajānām viṣayā, na bhogāḥ.
 «aśnāmi bhogā» iti ko ’bhyupeyāt
 prājñāḥ pratikāra|vidhau pravṛttah?

11.40 yaḥ pitta|dāhena vidahyamānah
 «śita|kriyām bhoga» iti vyavasyet,
 duḥkha|pratikāra|vidhau pravṛttah
 kāmeṣu kuryāt sa hi bhoga|saṃjñām.

kāmeṣv an|aikāntikatā ca yasmād
 ato ’pi me teṣu na bhoga|saṃjñā;
 ya eva bhāvā hi sukham tisanti
 ta eva duḥkham punar āvahanti.

'But pleasures are enjoyments,' some may think,
 yet none should be reckoned as enjoyments;
 For clothes and other objects in the world
 should be reckoned as remedies for pain.

For one desires water to slake one's thirst,
 food, likewise, to assuage one's hunger,
 House for shelter against wind, heat, and rain,
 clothes for the cold and to cover the loins.

A bed, likewise, to expel drowsiness,
 a carriage to avert travel's fatigue,
 A seat too as a respite from standing,
 and bathing to ensure
 strength, health, and cleanliness.

The objects of sense, therefore, are not enjoyments,
 but means of curing people's suffering.
 What wise man, while employing remedies,
 would think 'I am relishing enjoyments?'

A man who, as he's burning with bilious fever,
 decides 'cold remedies are enjoyments,'
 He, indeed, while using remedies for suffering,
 would give the name 'enjoyment' to pleasures.

11.40

Given that there's nothing absolute in pleasures,
 for that reason too I don't call them 'enjoyments';
 For the same things that provide joy,
 do, in their turn, bring pain as well.

gurūṇi vāsāṁsy agurūṇi c' āiva
 sukhāya śīte hy, aśukhāya gharme;
 candr'jāmśavaś candanam eva c' ḍoṣne
 sukhāya, duḥkhāya bhavanti śīte.

dvandvāni sarvasya yataḥ prasaktāny
 alābha|lābha|prabhṛtīni loke,
 ato 'pi n' āikānta|sukho 'sti kaś cin
 n' āikānta|duḥkhaḥ puruṣaḥ pṛthivyām.

drṣṭvā vimiśrām sukha|duḥkhatām me,
 rājyām ca dāsyām ca matām samānam;
 nityām hasaty eva hi n' āiva rājā,
 na c' āpi saṃtapyata eva dāsaḥ.

11.45 ājñā nṛ|patye 'bhyadhik" ēti» yat syān
 mahānti duḥkhāny ata eva rājñāḥ;
 āsaṅga|kāṣṭha|pratimo hi rājā,
 lokasya hetoḥ parikhedam eti.

rājye nṛ|pas tyāgini bahv|a|mitre
 viśvāsam āgacchatि ced vipannāḥ;
 ath' āpi viśrambham upaiti n' ēha,
 kiṁ nāma saukhyām cakitasya rājñāḥ?

yadā ca jitv" āpi mahīm samagrām
 vāsāya drṣṭām puram ekam eva;
 tatr' āpi c' āikām bhavanām niṣevyām,
 śramaḥ par'|ārthe nanu rāja|bhāvāḥ.

For aloewood and heavy clothes provide
 joy when it's cold but pain when it is hot;
 Moonbeams and sandal paste, likewise, provide
 joy when it's hot but pain when it is cold.

Because opposites such as gain and loss
 are the lot of everyone in this world;
 For that reason too no man on this earth
 tastes absolute joy or absolute pain.

Seeing that joy and pain are always mixed,
 I reckon king and slave to be the same;
 For, surely, a king does not always laugh,
 and a slave is not always in distress.

A king has great authority, one may argue;
 but that is the very cause of a king's distress;
 For a king, much like a carrying-pole,
 for the people's sake endures great travail.

11.45

If a king places faith in his kingdom,
 fickle and full of enemies, he's doomed;
 But if he fails to place his trust in it,
 then what happiness does a king enjoy,
 when he is trembling with fright?

When even after conquering the entire earth,
 we see that he gets just one city to dwell in;
 When even there he lives in just one residence;
 does not sovereignty consist in
 toiling for other people's sake?

rājño 'pi vāso|yugam ekam eva,
 kṣut|saṁnirodhāya tath" ânna|mātrā;
 śayyā tath" āik'|āsanam ekam eva;
 śeṣā višeṣā nr|pater madāya.

tuṣṭy|artham etac ca phalam yad' iṣṭam
 ṣte 'pi rājyān mama tuṣṭir asti.
 tuṣṭau ca satyām puruṣasya loke
 sarve višeṣā nanu nir|višeṣāḥ.

11.50 tan n' âsmi kāmān prati sampratāryah
 kṣemam̄ śivam̄ mārgam̄ anuprapannah;
 smṛtvā su|hṛttvam̄ tu punah̄ punar mām̄
 brūhi *pratijñām̄* khalu pālay' ēti.

na hy asmy amarṣena vanam̄ praviṣṭo,
 na śatru|bāṇair avadhūta|maulih,
 kṛta|sprho n' āpi phal'|ādhikebhyo,
 gṛhṇāmi n' āitad vacanam̄ yatas te.

yo danda|śūkam̄ kūpitam̄ bhujaṇ|gam̄
 muktvā vyavasyedd hi punar grahītum
 dāh'|ātmikām̄ vā jvalitām̄ trṇ'|ōlkām̄,
 samtyajya kāmān sa punar bhajeta.

Even a king wears only one pair of garments,
 and eats as much food as would allay his hunger;
 He sleeps in one bed and sits on a single seat;
 other opulence only puffs up a king's pride.

If one desires this fruit to obtain contentment,
 I'm content even without a kingdom.
 When a man has obtained contentment
 in this world,
 don't all luxuries seem quite ordinary?

I cannot be impelled, therefore, toward pleasures,
 for I've set out on the auspicious path to peace;
 But recalling our friendship, say to me
 again and again:
 'Hold fast to your pledge!'

11.50

For I entered the forest not out of anger,
 enemy arrows did not take away my crown,
 I do not crave ever higher rewards;
 therefore I decline this offer of yours.

Having cast off an angry snake itching to bite,
 or a fiery hay torch, whose nature is to burn,
 Should a man decide to hold them again,
 he would embrace once again
 pleasures he had once renounced.

andhāya yaś ca spṛhayed an|andho,
 baddhāya mukto vidhanāya c' ādhyah,
 unmatta|cittāya ca kalya|cittah:
 spṛhām sa kuryād viṣay'|ātmakāya.

bhaiks'|ōpabhog" iti ca n' ânukampyah
 kr̄ti jarā|mṛtyu|bhayaṁ titīrṣuh
 ih' ôttamam śānti|sukhaṁ ca yasya
 paratra duḥkhāni ca samvṛtāni.

11.55 lakṣmyām mahatyām api vartamānas
 trṣṇ" |âbhībhūtas tv anukampitavyah
 prāpnoti yaḥ śānti|sukhaṁ na c' ēha
 paratra duḥkhaiḥ pratigṛhyate ca.

evam tu vaktum bhavato 'nurūpam
 sattvasya vṛttasya kulasya c' âiva;
 mam' āpi vodhum sadṛśam pratijñām
 sattvasya vṛttasya kulasya c' âiva.

aham hi saṃsāra|śareṇa viddho
 viniḥsṛtaḥ śāntim avāptu|kāmah;
 n' ēccheyam āptum tri|dive 'pi rājyam
 nirāmayam, kim bata mānuṣeṣu!

The sighted man who envies a blind man,
 a free man who envies a prisoner,
 a wealthy man who envies a pauper,
 a sane man who envies one who's insane:
 That man would envy a person
 who's a slave to objects of sense.

One should not pity a man for eating almsfood,
 a skillful man who wishes to cross beyond
 the dangers of old age and death,
 A man who enjoys the highest joy of peace here,
 and escapes suffering in the hereafter.

One should pity a man overwhelmed by longing, 11.55
 although he enjoys the greatest sovereign power,
 A man who does not obtain the joy of peace here,
 and is gripped by suffering in the hereafter.

But to speak like this is in keeping with
 your character, conduct, and family;
 To keep my pledge too is in keeping with
 my character, conduct, and family.

For, pierced by the arrow of this samsaric life,
 I have departed desiring to obtain peace;
 I do not desire unhindered kingship
 even in the triple heaven;
 how much less then among humans!

«tri|varga|sevām», nr̄ipa, yat tu «kṛtsnataḥ
 paro manusy' |ârtha» iti tvam āttha mām,
 «an|artha» ity eva mam' âtra darśanam
 kṣayī tri|vargo hi na c' âpi tarpakah.

pade tu yasmin na jarā na bhīr na ruñ
 na janma n' âiv' ôparamo na c' âdhayah,
 tam eva manye puruś' |ârtham uttamam
 na vidyate yatra punah punah kriyā.

11.60 yad apy avocah «paripālyatām» jarā
 navam vayo gacchati vikriyām» iti,
 a|niścayo 'yam, capalam hi dṛsyate;
 jar” âpy a|dhīrā dhṛtimac ca yauvanam.

sva|karma|dakṣaś ca yad” ântiko jagad
 vayaḥsu sarveṣ a|vaśam vikarṣati,
 vināśa|kāle katham a|vyavasthite
 jarā pratīkṣyā viduṣā śam'|ēpsunā?

jar” |āyudho vyādhi|vikīrṇa|sāyako
 yad” ântiko vyādha iv' âśivah sthitah
 prajā|mṛgān bhāgya|van' |āśritāms tudan,
 vayaḥ|prakarṣam prati ko mano|rathah?

As to what you said to me, that the triple set
when followed in its entirety
is for humans the highest good;
My view on this is that it's truly an evil,
for the triple set is fleeting
and fails to satisfy.

The state in which there is no old age and no fear,
no sickness and no birth, no death and no distress,
That alone I take as the highest good for men,
in which there is no repeated activity.

As to what you said: 'Wait until old age,
youth is liable to vacillation;' 11.60
That is not fixed, there is uncertainty;
old age too can be fickle,
while youth is often steadfast.

When Death, who is so skilled at his work,
drags the world
helplessly in all periods of life,
How can a wise man seeking peace await old age,
when the time of death is so uncertain?

When Death stands like an ominous hunter,
using old age as his weapon,
spraying the arrows of sickness,
Striking down people as if they were deer
entering the forest of doom,
How can one dream about a ripe old age?

ato yuvā vā stha|viro 'tha vā śīśus
 tathā tvarāvān iha kartum arhati,
 yathā bhaved dharmavataḥ kṛt'ātmanah
 pravṛttir iṣṭā vinivṛttir eva vā.

yad āttha c' āp' «iṣṭa|phalām̄ kul'ōcitām̄
 kuruṣva dharmāya makha|kriyām» iti,
 namo makhebhyo—na hi kāmaye sukham̄
 parasya duḥkha|kriyayā yad isyate.

11.65 param̄ hi hantum̄ vi|vaśam̄ phal'ēpsayā
 na yukta|rūpam̄ karuṇ"ātmanah sataḥ;
 kratoḥ phalam̄ yady api śāsvatam̄ bhavet,
 tath" āpi kṛtvā, kim u yat kṣay'ātmakam?

bhavec ca dharmo yadi n' āparo vidhir
 vratena śilena manah|śamena vā,
 tath" āpi n' āiv' ārhati sevitum̄ kratum̄
 viśasya yasmin param ucyate phalam.

ih' āpi tāvat puruṣasya tiṣṭhataḥ
 pravartate yat para|hiṁsayā sukhām,
 tad apy an|iṣṭam̄ sa|ghṛṇasya dhīmato;
 bhav'āntare kim bata yan na dṛsyate?

So, whether one is young, old, or even a child,
 one should quickly act in such a way here
 That, endowed with dharma, with a perfected self,
 one will win the continued life one seeks,
 or the total cessation of such life.

As to what you said:

'For dharma's sake perform the sacrificial rites,
 as is your family custom,
 rites that yield the desired results;'
 My respects to sacrificial rites—
 but I do not covet joy that is sought
 by inflicting pain on another being.

For to kill some hapless being to obtain results
 does not befit a good and compassionate man,
 Even if that rite yields everlasting results;
 how much less when the results are ephemeral?

11.65

Even if dharma were not a different process,
 through vows, moral restraints,
 tranquility of mind,
 Yet it is not right to perform rites whose result
 is said to derive from killing another being.

Now, even the pleasure that a man living here
 derives from his harming another being,
 Is unwelcome to a wise compassionate man;
 how much more in the hereafter,
 regarding an unseen pleasure?

na ca pratāryo 'smi phala|pravṛttaye
 bhaveṣu, rājan, ramate na me manah;
 latā iv' āmbho|dhara|vṛṣṭi|tāditāḥ
 pravṛttayah sarvalgatā hi cañcalāḥ.

ih' āgataś c' āham ito didṛkṣayā
 muner Arāḍasya vimokṣa|vādinaḥ
 prayāmi c' ādy' āiva. nr|p' āstu te śivam,
 vacaḥ kṣamethā mama tattva|niṣṭhuram.

11.70 av' Ḗndravad divy, ava śaśvad arkavad,
 guṇair ava, śreya ih' āva, gām ava,
 av' āyur, āryair ava, sat|sutān ava,
 śriyaś ca, rājann, ava dharmam ātmanah.

him'|āri|ket'|ūdbhava|saṁbhav'|āntare
 yathā dviljo yāti vimokṣayāṁ tanum,
 him'|āri|śatru|kṣaya|śatru|ghātane
 tath" āntare yāhi vimokṣayan manah.»

You can't lure me to act for the sake of results;
 my mind, king, delights not in existential states;
 For, like creepers battered by showers
 from rain clouds,
 actions are unsteady and darting everywhere.

I have come here and I will leave today
 desiring to see the sage Aráda,
 who teaches release.

Good fortune to you, king,
 and bear with my words
 speaking a harsh truth.

Be glad like Indra in heaven, ever shine like the sun, 11.70
 flourish with virtues and obtain here
 the highest bliss,
 Protect the earth, obtain long life,
 flourish with Aryas,
 protect the sons of the virtuous,
 possess sovereign power,
 And, O King, follow the dharma proper to you.*

As fire, the twice-born, when it encounters
 rain pouring from a cloud that springs
 from smoke,
 sign of the enemy of cold,
 proceeds releasing its form,

So proceed, releasing your mind by killing
 the foes of the destruction of darkness,
 the foe of the sun, the enemy of cold.”*

nṝpo 'bravīt s'āñjalir āgata|spṛho:
 «yath”|eṣṭam āpnotu bhavān a|vighnataḥ.
 avāpya kāle kṛta|kṛtyatām imāṁ
 mam' āpi kāryo bhavatā tv anugrahaḥ.»

sthiram pratijñāya «tath” ēti» pārthive
 tataḥ sa Vaiśvāṁtaram āśramaṁ yayau;
 parivrajantam tam udikṣya vismito
 nṝpo 'pi vavrāja purim Girivrajam.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye Kāma|vigarhaṇo nām'
 āikā|daśaḥ sargah.

With joined hands the king said, full of longing:

“May you obtain what you desire,
free from hindrance.

Having in time achieved success in your task,
Deign to show me also your favor.”

Saying “Yes,” he made a firm promise to the king,
and set out to the Vaishvántara hermitage;
seeing him wandering thus, the king was amazed,
and went back to the city of Giri-vraja.

Thus ends the eleventh canto named “Condemnation of Passion”
of the great poem “Life of the Buddha.”



CANTO 12
THE MEETING WITH ARÁDA

12.1

TATAH ŠAMA|vihārasya
 muner Iksvāku|candramāḥ
 Arādasy' āśramam bheje
 vapuṣā pūrayann iva.

sa Kālāma|sa|gotreṇa
 ten' āloky' āiva dūrataḥ
 uccaiḥ «sv|āgatam» ity uktaḥ
 samīpam upajagmivān.

tāv ubhau nyāyataḥ pṛṣṭvā
 dhātu|sāmyam paras|param,
 dāravyor medhyayor vr̥syoh
 śucau deśe niṣedatuḥ.

tam āśinam nṛpa|sutam
 so 'bravīn muni|sattamaḥ
 bahumāna|viśālābhyaṁ
 darśanābhyaṁ pibann iva:

12.5

«viditam me yathā, saumya,
 niṣkrānto bhavanād asi
 chittvā sneha|mayaṁ pāśam
 pāśam dr̥pta iva dvi|paḥ.

sarvathā dhṛtimac c' āiva
 prājñam c' āiva manas tava
 yas tvam prāptah śriyam tyaktvā
 latām viṣa|phalām iva.

THEN, THAT moon of the Ikshvákus
 reached the cloister of Aráda,
 a sage who abided in peace,
 filling it, as if, with his grace.

The sage of the Kaláma line,
 just as he saw him from afar,
 declared in a loud voice: "Welcome!"
 and the prince then drew close to him.

They both asked according to rule
 about each other's health;
 then they sat down in a clean spot
 on pure stools made of wood.

After the king's son was seated,
 that best of sages said to him,
 drinking him in, as if, with eyes
 extended wide in deep respect:

"I already know, my dear,
 how you set out from your home,
 Having cut the fetters of affection,
 like an enraged elephant its fetters.

Your mind is clearly wise:
 steadfast in every way,
 For you have come forsaking sovereign power,
 like a creeper bearing poisonous fruit.

n' âscaryam̄ jīrṇā|vayaso
 yaj jagmuḥ pārthivā vanam
 apatyebhyah̄ śriyam̄ dattvā
 bhukt'|ōcchiṣṭām iva srajam.

idam̄ me matam̄ âscaryam̄,
 nave vayasi yad bhavān
 a|bhuktv" âiva śriyam̄ prāptah̄
 sthito viṣaya|gocare.

tad vijñātum imam̄ dharmam̄
 paramam̄ bhājanam̄ bhavān;
 jñāna|plavam adhiṣṭhāya
 śighram̄ duḥkh'|ārṇavam̄ tara.

12.10 śisye yady api vijñāte
 śāstram̄ kālena varṇyate,
 gāmbhīryād vyavasāyāc ca
 na parīkṣyo bhavān mama..»

iti vākyam Arāḍasya
 vijñāya sa nara'|ṛṣabhaḥ
 babhūva parama|prītaḥ
 provāc' ottaram eva ca:

«viraktasy' āpi yad idam̄
 saumukhyam̄ bhavataḥ param
 a|kr̄'|ārtho 'py anen' āsmi
 kr̄'|ārtha iva samprati.

It is no great wonder that aged kings
 should go away to the forest,
 Bestowing sovereign power on their children,
 like a used and cast-off garland.

Now, I consider this a great wonder,
 that you, while still a young man
 Living in the thick of sensual pleasures,
 should come here even before
 you have enjoyed sovereign power.

You are, therefore, the paramount vessel
 to comprehend this, the supreme dharma;
 Get into this boat of knowledge,
 quickly cross the ocean of grief.

Though this science is taught after a time,
 when a student has undergone the test,
 Because you're so profound and resolute,
 there's no need for me to test you at all.”

12.10

Hearing these words of Aráda,
 that bull among men,
 was filled with great joy,
 and made this reply:

“By this your great kindness to me,
 although you are freed from passion,
 I feel I've now attained my goal,
 although I've not attained it yet.

didṛksur iva hi jyotir,
 yiśur iva daiśikam,
 tvad|darśanam aham manye
 titīrṣur iva ca plavam.

tasmād arhasi tad vaktum
 vaktavyam yadi manyase
 jarā|maraṇa|rōgebhyo
 yath” āyam parimucyate.»

12.15 ity Arāḍah kumārasya
 māhātmyād eva coditah
 saṃkṣiptam kathayām cakre
 svasya śāstrasya niścayam:

«śrūyatām ayam asmākam
 siddhāntah, śrīvatām vara:
 yathā bhavati saṃsāro
 yathā c’ āiva nivartate.

Prakṛtiś ca Vikāraś ca
 janma mṛtyur jar” āiva ca—
 tat tāvat Sattvam ity uktam,
 sthira|sattva, parehi tat.

tatra tu Prakṛtim nāma
 viddhi, prakṛti|kovida:
 pañca bhūtāny, aham|kāram,
 buddhim, a|vyaktam eva ca.

As a light for a man longing to see,
 as a guide for a man longing to trek,
 As a boat for a man longing to cross,
 so do I regard your philosophy.

So deign to explain it to me,
 if you think it's right to explain,
 So that I shall become free,
 from old age, death, and disease."

This eulogy by the prince
 spurred Aráda to explain
 succinctly the conclusions
 of his system of thought:

12.15

"Listen, O best of listeners,
 to this settled doctrine of ours:
 How samsara comes into being,
 likewise, how it ceases to be.

Primal nature and Transformation,
 birth, death, and old age—
 All that is called Being, please understand,
 you whose being is firm.*

Among these, know that the Primal nature,
 you who know primary constituents,
 Consists of the five elements, ego,
 the intellect, and the unmanifest.*

Vikāra iti budhyasva
 viśayān indriyāṇi ca,
 pāṇī|pādāṇi ca vādāṇi ca
 pāy'|ūpasthāṇi tathā manah.

12.20 asya kṣetrasya vijñānāt
 Kṣetra|jñāna iti samjñī ca;
 «Kṣetra|jñāna» iti c' ātmāṇāṇi
 kathayanty ātmā|cintakāḥ.

sa|śisyāḥ Kapilaś c' ēha
 pratibuddhir iti smṛtiḥ.
 sa|putro 'pratibuddhas tu
 Prajāpatir ih' ôcyate.

jāyate jīryate c' āiva
 bādhyate mriyate ca yat,
 tad vyaktam iti vijñeyam;
 a|vyaktam tu viparyayāt.

a|jñānāṇi karma trṣṇā ca
 jñeyāḥ samsāra|hetavāḥ;
 sthito 'smiṁs tritye jantus
 tat sattvāṇi n' ātivartate—

vi|pratyayād, aham|kārāt,
 samdehād, abhisamplavāt,
 a|viśes'|ān|upāyābhyaṇi
 saṅgād, abhyavapātataḥ.

Recognize that Transformation
is the senses and sense objects,
Hands and feet, as also the mouth,
anus, genitals, and the mind.*

Because it cognizes this field,
what is conscious is called
the Knower of the field;
But those who contemplate the self,
call the self 'Knower of the field.'*

12.20

Kápila with his pupils, tradition says,
is the Conscious in this system;
Praja-pati with his sons is said to be
the Unconscious in this system.*

What is born, what grows old,
what is bound, and what dies:
All that, you should know, is the Manifest;
the Unmanifest is known
by the opposite of these.

Ignorance, action, desire, you should know,
are the causes of samsara;
When a creature is mired in these three,
it will never transcend that Being—
by reason of wrong knowledge and ego,
confusion and wrong association,
non-discrimination and wrongful means,
attachment and falling away.

12.25 tatra vi|pratyayo nāma
 viparītam̄ pravartate,
 anyathā kurute kāryam̄
 mantavyam̄ manyate 'nyathā.

«bravīmy aham, aham̄ vedmi,
 gacchāmy aham, aham̄ sthitah —
 it' ih' āivam aham|kāras tv,
 an|aham|kāra, vartate.

yas tu bhāvān a|saṃdigdhān
 ekī|bhāvena paśyati
 mṛt|piṇḍavad, a|saṃdeha,
 saṃdehah̄ sa ih' ôcyate.

«ya ev' āham̄, sa ev' ēdam̄,
 mano, buddhiś ca, karma ca;
 yaś c' āiv' āiṣa gaṇah̄, so 'ham:
 iti yah̄, so 'bhisam̄plavaḥ.

a|viśeṣam̄, viśeṣa|jñā,
 pratibuddh'â|prabuddhayoh̄
 prakṛtīnām̄ ca yo veda,
 so '|viśeṣa iti smṛtaḥ.

12.30 namas|kāra|vaṣṭa|kārau
 prokṣaṇ'âbhuyukṣaṇ'âdayah —
 an|upāya iti prājñair,
 upāya|jñā, praveditah̄.

Among these, wrong knowledge
proceeds aberrantly,
Doing wrongly what has to be done,
thinking wrongly what must be thought.

12.25

'I speak, I know,
I go, I stand'—
The ego proceeds thus in this system,
O you who are free of ego.

When one sees as unified
things that are not commingled,
Like a ball of earth, O unconfused one,
it is called confusion in this system.

'I am the very same as mind,
intellect, and activity;
I'm truly the same as this group:'
that is wrong association.

When one fails to discriminate,
you who know to discriminate,
Between the Conscious and the Unconscious,
and among Primal nature's constituents,
tradition calls it non-discrimination.

The ritual sounds *namah* and *vashat*,*
ritual sprinklings and annointings—
The wise declare these to be wrongful means,
O you who know the rightful means.

12.30

sajjate yena dur|m̄edhā
 mano|vāg|buddhi|karmabhiḥ
 viṣayeṣv, an|abhiṣvaṅga,
 so 'bhiṣvaṅga iti smṛtaḥ.

«mam' ēdam» «aham asy' ēti»
 yad duḥkham abhimanyate,
 vijñeyo 'bhavapātah sa
 samsāre yena pātyate.

ity a|vidyāṁ hi vidvān sa
 pañca|parvāṁ samīhate
 tamo mohāṁ mahā|mohāṁ
 tāmisra|dvayam eva ca.

tatr' ālasyāṁ tamo viddhi,
 mohāṁ mṛtyum ca janma ca;
 mahā|mohas tv, a|saṁmoha,
 kāma ity eva gamyatām.

12.35 yasmād atra ca bhūtāni
 pramuhyanti mahānty api,
 tasmād esa, mahā|bāho,
 mahā|moha iti smṛtaḥ.

tāmisram iti c' ā|krodha,
 krodham ev' ādhikurvate;
 viṣādaṁ c' āndha|tāmisram,
 a|viṣāda, pracakṣate.

By which a fool is attached to the objects of sense,
 through mind, speech, intellect, and acts,
 That, traditions tells us, is attachment,
 O you who are unattached.

When one imagines suffering with the thought,
 'This is linked to me' and 'I'm linked to this,'
 That should be recognized as falling away,
 by which one is made to fall into samsara.

In this way, that wise one maintains,
 that ignorance has five sections:
 Gloom, delusion, great delusion,
 likewise, the two kinds of darkness.*

Among these, know that gloom is laziness,
 and delusion consists of death and birth;
 O you without delusion, understand
 that great delusion is simply passion.

Because even great beings are
 deluded in this regard;
 Therefore, O you who possess great arms,
 tradition calls it great delusion.

By darkness, O angerless one,
 they refer simply to anger,
 Blind darkness, they say, is dejection,
 O you who are free of dejection.

12.35

anay” ā|vidyayā bālah
 samyuktah pañca|parvayā
 samsāre duḥkha|bhūyiṣṭhe
 janmasv abhiniṣicyate.

draṣṭā, śrotā ca, mantā ca,
 kārya|karaṇam eva ca
 «aham» ity evam āgamya
 samsāre parivartate.

ih’ āibhir hetubhir, dhīman,
 janma|srotaḥ pravartate;
 hetv|a|bhāvāt phal’|ā|bhāva
 iti vijñātum arhati!

12.40 tatra samyan̄|matir vidyān,
 mokṣa|kāma, catuṣṭayam:
 pratibuddh’|ā|prabuddhau ca
 vyaktam a|vyaktam eva ca.

yathāvad etad vijñāya
 Kṣetra|jñō hi catuṣṭayam,
 ājavam̄javatām̄ hitvā
 prāpnoti padam a|ksaram.

ity|artham̄ brāhmaṇā loke
 parama|brahma|vādinah
 brahma|caryam̄ carant’ iha
 brāhmaṇān vāsayanti ca.»

Permeated by this ignorance
 with five sections, a foolish man
 Is forced into birth after birth,
 in samsara where pain prevails.

When a person thinks that he is
 the seer, the hearer, the thinker,
 And the agent of the result,
 he goes around in samsara.

In this system, wise one, these
 are the causes by means of which
 the stream of births keeps rolling on;
 You should understand:
 when there is no cause,
 there'll be no effect!

Of these, you who desire release,
 a right thinking man
 ought to know these four:
 The Conscious and the Unconscious,
 the Manifest and the Unmanifest.

I 2.40

For the Knower of the field, when he
 has properly fathomed these four,
 Gives up the stream of births and deaths
 and reaches the undecaying state.

To this end brahmins in the world,
 expounding the highest brahman,
 Walk the brahma-course in our system,
 and likewise instruct other brahmins."

iti vākyam idam śrutvā
 munes tasya nṛp'ātmajah
 abhyupāyam ca papraccha
 padam eva ca naiṣṭhikam:

«brahma|caryam idam caryam
 yathā yāvac ca yatra ca,
 dharmasy' āsyā ca paryantam
 bhavān vyākhyātum arhati.»

12.45 ity Arādo yathā|śāstraṁ
 vispaṣṭ'ārthaṁ samāsataḥ
 tam ev' ānyena kalpena
 dharmam asmai vyabhāṣata:

«ayam ādau gṛhān muktvā
 bhaikṣakam liṅgam āśritah
 samudācāra|vistīrṇam
 śīlam ādāya vartate.

samtoṣam param āsthāya
 yena tena yatas tataḥ
 viviktam sevate vāsam
 nir|dvandvah śāstra|vit kṛtī.

tato rāgād bhayaṁ dṛṣṭvā,
 vairāgyāc ca param śivam,
 nigṛhṇann indriya|grāmam
 yataste manasah śame.

After he listened to this speech
of that sage, the son of the king,
inquired further about the means,
also about the final state:

“How does one walk this brahma-course?
For how long a time? And where?
What’s the limit of this dharma?
Please, Sir, explain that to me.”

Aráda explained to him in this way,
the same dharma in a different way,
in concise form and clear language,
in accordance with sacred texts:

12.45

“At the outset, he leaves his home,
puts on a mendicant’s emblem;
And lives adhering to a rule of life
embracing all standards of good conduct.

Becoming supremely content
with whatever he gets
from anyone at all,
He lives in a secluded place,
free from the pairs of opposites,
skillful, learned in sacred texts.

Then, seeing that from passion comes danger,
from detachment, likewise, the highest bliss,
He restrains all his sense organs
and strives to quieten his mind.

ath' ô viviktam kāmebhyo
 vyāpād' |ādibhya eva ca
 vivekaljam avāpnoti
 pūrva|dhyānam vitarkavat.

12.50 tac ca dhyāna|sukham prāpya
 tat tad eva vitarkayan,
 a|pūrva|sukha|lābhena
 hriyate bāliśo janah.

śamen' āivam|vidhen' āyam
 kāma|dveṣa|vigarhiṇā
 Brahma|lokam avāpnoti
 paritoṣenā vañcitah.

jñātvā vidvān vitarkāṁ tu
 manah|saṃkṣobha|kārakān
 tad|viyuktam avāpnoti
 dhyānam prīti|sukh'|ānvitam.

hriyamāṇas tayā prītyā
 yo viśeṣam na paśyati,
 sthānam bhāsvaram āpnoti
 deveṣv ābhāsvareṣu saḥ.

yas tu prīti|sukhāt tasmād
 vivecayati mānasam,
 trīyam labhate dhyānam
 sukham prīti|vivarjitam.

Thereupon, he attains the first level of trance
 rising from discrimination
 and containing discursive thought,
 Insulated from all passions,
 from malevolence and the like.

When he has experienced that joy of trance,
 pondered it over and over again,
 The fool is carried away by gaining
 a hitherto unexperienced joy.

12.50

Through tranquility of this sort,
 that holds love and hate in disdain,
 That man attains the brahma-world,
 deceived by overwhelming joy.

But when the wise man realizes that
 discursive thought perturbs the mind,
 He attains the trance that's divorced from that,
 and containing delight and joy.

When one's carried away by that delight
 and does not perceive a superior state,
 One obtains the state of luminescence
 among the gods who are luminescent.

But one who dissociates his mind
 from that delight and from that joy,
 Obtains the third level of trance,
 containing joy without delight.

12.55 yas tu tasmin sukhe magno
 na viśeṣāya yatnavān,
 śubha|kr̥tsnaiḥ sa sāmānyam
 sukham̄ prāpnoti daivataih.

tādṛśam̄ sukham̄ āsādya
 yo na rajyaty upekṣakah,
 caturtham̄ dhyānam̄ āpnoti
 sukha|duḥkha|vivarjitam.

tatra ke cid vyavasyanti
 mokṣa ity abhimāninaḥ
 sukha|duḥkha|parityāgād
 a|vyāpārāc ca cetasaḥ.

asya dhyānasya tu phalam̄
 samam̄ devair bṛhat|phalaiḥ
 kathayanti bṛhat|kālam̄
 bṛhat|prajñā|parikṣakāḥ.

samādher vyutthitas tasmād
 dr̥ṣṭvā doṣam̄ś charīriṇām
 jñānam̄ ārohati prajñāḥ
 śarīra|vinivṛttaye.

12.60 tatas tad dhyānam utsr̥jya
 viśeṣe kr̥ta|niścayah
 kāmebhya iva sa prājño
 rūpād api virajyate.

But he who gets himself mired in that joy
 and does not strive for a superior state,
 Obtains a joy equal to that
 of the Shubha·kṛtsna gods.

12.55

When after obtaining that kind of joy,
 a man becomes indifferent
 and is not enamored with it,
 He gains the fourth level of trance
 that's devoid of sorrow and joy.

In that state, through their imagination,
 some conclude that it is release,
 Because joy and sorrow are forsaken,
 and the mind ceases to function.

Those who explore the knowledge of the Great,*
 however, describe the fruit of this trance
 As lasting over a great span of time
 together with the Brihat·phala gods.

Seeing the faults of embodied beings,
 a wise man comes out of that trance
 And sets his mind on that knowledge
 that would rid him of his body.

Then, having cast aside that trance,
 he sets his sight on a higher state;
 As he once withdrew from pleasures,
 so now the wise man withdraws
 also from visible form.

12.60

śarīre khāni yāny asmin
 tāny ādau parikalpayan
 ghaneṣv api tato dravyeṣv
 ākāśam adhimucyate.

ākāśa|gatam ātmānam
 saṃkṣipyta tv aparo budhah,
 tad ev' ân|antataḥ paśyan
 viśeṣam adhigacchati.

adhyātma|kuśalas tv anyo
 nivarty' ātmānam ātmanā,
 kiṃ cin n' āst' iti saṃpaśyann
 ākimcanya iti smṛtaḥ.

tato muñjād iṣīk" ēva
 śakuniḥ pañjarād iva
 Kṣetraljñō niḥṣṭo dehān
 «mukta» ity abhidhīyate.

12.65 etat tat paramam brahma
 nir|lingam dhruvam alaṅkaram
 yan «mokṣa» iti tattvaljñāḥ
 kathayanti maniṣināḥ.

ity upāyaś ca mokṣaś ca
 mayā saṃdarśitas tava;
 yadi jñātam, yadi rucir,
 yathāvat pratipadyatām.

First he forms a mental picture
 of the empty holes within his body;
 Then he focuses his mind on
 the empty space in solid objects too.

But another wise man draws together
 the self spread over empty space,
 And, deeming that alone as eternal,
 arrives at a superior state.

But another versed in the inner self,
 effacing his self with the self,
 Perceives that there exists nothing at all;
 tradition calls him one for whom
 nothing exists at all.

Then, like a reed from its grass sheath,
 or like a bird from a bird-cage,
 Knower of the field, from body freed,
 is designated 'released being.'

This here is the supreme brahman,
 without a distinguishing mark,
 constant and imperishable,
 Which wise men who perceive the truth
 describe as 'release.'

I've thus explained clearly to you
 the means, as also the release;
 If you understand it, if you like it,
 then undertake it in the proper way.

Jaigīśavyo 'tha Janako
 vṛddhaś c' āiva Parāśaraḥ
 imaṁ panthānam āśadya
 muktā hy anye ca mokṣinah.»

iti tasya sa tad vākyam
 gṛhitvā tu vicārya ca,
 pūrva|hetu|bala|prāptah
 pratyuttaram uvāca ha:

«śrutaṁ jñānam idam sūkṣmam
 parataḥ parataḥ śivam;
 Kṣetra|jñasy' ā|parityāgād
 avaimy etad a|naiṣṭhikam.

12.70 Vikāra|Prakṛtibhyo hi
 Kṣetra|jñām muktam apy aham
 manye prasava|dharmāṇam
 bija|dharmāṇam eva ca.

viśuddho yady api hy ātmā
 nirmukta iti kalpyate;
 bhūyah pratyaya|sad|bhāvād
 a|muktaḥ sa bhaviṣyati.

ṛtu|bhūmy|ambu|virahād
 yathā bījam na rohati,
 rohati pratyayais tais tais
 tadvat so 'pi mato mama.

For Jaigishávyá and Jánaka,
as also the Elder Paráshara,
Attained release by taking to this path,
as also others who have sought release.”*

The prince, however, took note
of his speech and gave it thought;
and endowed with the power of
impulses from previous births,
he gave this reply:

“I have listened to this subtle knowledge
that grows progressively more and more pure;
But since the Field-knower is not forsaken,
I think it is short of the absolute.

For, although the Knower of the field is freed
from Primal nature and Transformations,
Yet I think it still has the quality
of giving birth and serving as a seed.*

12.70

For, though the soul, being wholly pure,
you consider to be released;
Yet, because the causal roots are present,
it will once again become unreleased.

A seed will not sprout in the wrong season,
or when water and good soil are absent;
It sprouts when those causal roots are present;
that holds true, I think, also for the soul.

yat karm' |â|jñāna|trṣṇānāṁ
 tyāgān mokṣāś ca kalpyate,
 atyantas tat|parityāgaḥ
 saty ātmani na vidyate.

hitvā hitvā trayam idam
 viśeṣas t' ūpalabhyate;
 ātmanas tu sthitir yatra
 tatra sūkṣmam idam trayam.

12.75 sūkṣmatvāc c' āiva doṣāṇām,
 a|vyāpārāc ca cetasaḥ,
 dīrghatvād āyuṣaś c' āiva—
 mokṣas tu parikalpyate.

ahamkāra|parityāgo
 yaś c' āiṣa parikalpyate—
 saty ātmani parityāgo
 n' āham|kārasya vidyate.

saṃkhy" |ādibhir a|muktaś ca
 nir|guṇo na bhavaty ayam;
 tasmād a|sati nairgunye
 n' āṣya mokṣo 'bhidhīyate.

guṇino hi guṇānāṁ ca
 vyatireko na vidyate;
 rūp'|oṣṇābhyāṁ virahito
 na hy agnir upalabhyate.

And if you contend that release is effected
 by giving up action, ignorance, and desire;
 Their complete abandonment is impossible,
 so long as one upholds the existence of the soul.

The ongoing abandonment of these three,
 indeed, brings about a superior state;
 Yet, where the soul continues to endure,
 these three will remain in a subtle form.

The faults are subtle, the mind is dormant,
 and the span of life is, likewise, prolonged—
 On that basis one imagines
 that it is the state of release.

12.75

This abandonment of ego
 that you imagine to take place—
 When there's a soul, the abandonment
 of the ego cannot take place.

This soul is not attributeless
 when it is not released
 from number and the like;*
 And it is not viewed as released,
 when it's not free of attributes.

For there exists no disjuncture between
 attributes and the one possessing them;
 For it's not possible to perceive fire
 that's devoid of heat and visible form.

prāg dehān na bhaved dehī,
 prāg gunebhyas tathā gunī;
 tasmād ādau vimuktaḥ san
 śarīrī badhyate punah.

12.80 Kṣetra|jñō vi|śarīraś ca
 jñō vā syād aljñā eva vā,
 yadi jñō jñeyam asy' āsti
 jñeye sati na mucyate.

ath' aljñā iti siddho vah,
 kalpitena kim ātmanā?
 vin" āpi hy ātman" aljñānam
 prasiddham kāṣṭha|kudyavat.

parataḥ paratas tyāgo
 yasmāt tu guṇavān smṛtaḥ,
 tasmāt sarva|parityāgān
 manye kr̥tsnām kr̥t'|ārthatām.»

iti dharmam Arāḍasya
 viditvā, na tutoṣa saḥ;
 «alkr̥tsnam» iti vijñāya
 tata pratijagāma ha.

Prior to the body there does not exist
 a possessor of the body;
 and prior to attributes there is
 no possessor of attributes;
 Therefore, although released at first,
 a possessor of the body
 is bound over again.

And, without the body, the Knower of the field
 should be either a knower or not a knower;
 If he's a knower, there's something for him to know;
 and if there is something for him to know,
 then he is not released.

If, on the contrary, your settled view
 is that he is not a knower,
 then why do you invent a soul?
 For non-knowing is truly established
 even without a soul,
 as in a log or wall.

Progressively greater abandonment,
 tradition says, is more perfect;
 Therefore, I think that abandoning all
 leads to the full attainment of the goal."

Learning Aráda's dharma as described
 did not bring him any satisfaction;
 when he realized that it was incomplete,
 he went away from there.

12.80

viśeṣam atha śuśrūṣur
 Udrakasy' āśramam yayau;
 ātma|grāhāc ca tasy' āpi
 jagṛhe na sa darśanam.

12.85 samjñ" |â|samjñitvayor doṣam
 jñātvā hi munir Udrakah,
 ākīmcanyāt param lebhe
 samjñ" |â|samjñ" |ātmikām gatim.

yasmāc c' ālambane sūkṣme
 samjñ" |â|samjñe tataḥ param
 n' â|samjñī n' āiva samjñ" ēti
 tasmāt tatra gata|spr̥haḥ.

yataś ca buddhis tatr' āiva
 sthit" ānyatr' â|pracāriṇī,
 sūkṣm" â|paṭvī tatas tatra
 n' â|samjñitvam na samjñitā.

yasmāc ca tad api prāpya
 punar āvartate jagat,
 Bodhi|sattvah param prepsus
 tasmād Udrakam atyajat.

tato hitv" āśramam tasya
 śreyo|rthī kṛta|niścayah
 bheje Gayasya rāja'|rṣer
 Nagarī|samjñam āśramam.

He then went to Údraka's hermitage,
seeking to learn about a higher state;
but he didn't accept Údraka's doctrine,
because he also believed in a soul.

For the sage Údraka perceived the fault
of cognition and of non-cognition,
and attained the state beyond nothingness,
that's characterized by neither
cognition nor non-cognition.*

12.85

Because cognition and non-cognition
are both states that contain subtle substrates,
so he thought that the state beyond them was
neither cognition nor non-cognition,
and, therefore, he longed for that.

Because the intellect, subtle and static, remains
in that state alone, without proceeding elsewhere,
therefore, in that state there's neither
cognition nor non-cognition.

But, because even after attaining that state
a man returns once again to the world,
the bodhisattva then left Údraka behind,
aiming to attain a state beyond that.

Then, after he had left his hermitage,
seeking after bliss, firmly resolute,
he repaired to the royal seer Gaya's
hermitage, having the name Nágari.

12.90 atha Nairañjanā|tire
 śucau śuci|parākramah
 cakāra vāsam ekānta|
 vihār'|ābhiratir muniḥ.

[tatas] tat|pūrvam [āśritān]
 pañc'|ēndriya|vaś'|ōddhatān
 tapah|[saṃśraya]|vratino
 bhikṣūn pañca niraikṣata.

te c' ôpatasthur dṛṣṭv" âtra
 bhikṣavas tam momukṣavah
 puny'|ārjita|dhan'|ārogyam
 indriy'|ārthā iv' ēsvaram.

sampūjyamānas taiḥ prahvair
 vinayād anuvartibhiḥ
 tad|vaśa|sthāyibhiḥ śisyair
 lolair mana iv' ēndriyaiḥ—

«mṛtyu|janm'|ānta|karaṇe
 syād upāyo 'yam?» ity atha
 duṣ|karāṇi samārebhe
 tapāṁsy an|aśanena sah.

12.95 upavāsa|vidhīn n' āikān
 kurvan nara|durācarān
 varsāṇi ṣaṭ śama|prepsur
 akarot kārṣyam ātmānah.

Then, that sage, whose valor was pure,
finding delight in solitude,
made his abode on the pure bank
of the river Nairáñjana.

12.90

There he saw five mendicants who
had come there before, given to
vows and austeries, puffed up
by control of the five senses.

Seeing him there and desiring release,
the mendicants came to him, as objects
of sense come to a person of high rank,
whose meritorious deeds
had won him wealth and health.

As they waited upon him with reverence,
living as pupils under his control
and obedient because of their training,
like fickle senses waiting on the mind—

he then undertook fierce austeries
by fasting, thinking that
that was the means whereby
death and birth are destroyed.

Observing many kinds of fast,
difficult for men to perform,
he shriveled up his body for
six years in his pursuit of calm.

12.95

anna|kāleṣu c' āik'|āikaiḥ
 sa kola|tila|taṇḍulaiḥ
 a|pāra|pāra|saṃsāra|
 pāram prepsur apārayat.

dehād apacayas tena
 tapasā tasya yaḥ kṛtaḥ,
 sa ev' ḫopacayo bhūyas
 tejas" âsyā kṛto 'bhavat.

kṛśo 'py a|kṛśa|kīrti|śrīr
 hlādaṁ cakre 'nya|cakṣuṣām
 kumudānām iva śarac|
 chukla|paks'jādi|candramāḥ.

tvag|asthi|śeṣo nih|śeṣair
 medah|piśita|śoṇitaiḥ
 ksīṇo 'py a|ksīṇa|gāmbhīryaḥ
 samudra iva sa vyabhāt.

12.100 atha kaṣṭa|tapah|spaṣṭa|
 vyartha|kliṣṭa|tanur muniḥ
 bhava|bhīrur imāṁ cakre
 buddhim buddhatva|kāṅkṣayā.

The farther shore of samsara,
 the shore that has no farther shore,
 yearning to reach, he subsisted
 by consuming during mealtimes
 one jujube, one sesame seed,
 and a single grain of rice.

Whatever diminution of body
 was created by his austerities,
 it was augmented to the same extent
 by the power of his inner energy.

Although he was decayed in his body,
 but his splendor and glory undecayed,
 he brought delight to the eyes of others,
 like the autumn moon to night lotuses
 at the beginning of the bright fortnight.

Although shrunk in body,
 reduced to skin and bones,
 drained of fat, flesh, and blood,
 yet, with his profundity unimpaired,
 he sparkled like the sea.

Then, the sage, his body clearly tortured
 for no purpose by vile austerities,
 and afraid of continued existence,
 made this resolve, longing for Buddhahood:

12.100

«n' āyam dharmo virāgāya,
 na bodhāya, na muktaye;
 jambu|mūle mayā prāpto
 yas tadā, sa vidhir dhruvah.

na c' āsau dur|balen' āptum
 śakyam» ity āgat'|ādarah
 śarīra|bala|vriddhy|artham
 idam bhūyo 'nvacintayat:

«kṣut|pipāsā|śrama|klāntah
 śramād a|svastha|mānasah
 prāpnuyān manas” avāpyam
 phalam katham a|nirvṛtah?

nirvṛtiḥ prāpyate samyak
 satat'|ēndriya|tarpaṇāt
 samātarpit'|ēndriyatayā
 manah|svāsthyaṁ avāpyate.

12.105 svastha|prasanna|manasah
 samādhīr upapadyate,
 samādhī|yukta|cittasya
 dhyāna|yogaḥ pravartate.

dhyāna|pravartanād dharmāḥ
 prāpyante yair avāpyate
 dur|labham śāntam aljaram
 param tad a|mṛtam padam.»

"This dharma will not lead to detachment,
to Awakening or release;
The path I attained at that time
under the rose apple tree
was indeed the certain path.*

But that path cannot be traversed
by a man who is weak."

Thus, with a sense of urgency
he reflected on this again
to increase his bodily strength:

"When a man is worn out
by hunger, thirst, and fatigue,
his mind unwell with fatigue,
How will he, who is not tranquil, attain
the fruit that the mind alone can attain?

Tranquility is properly attained
by always making the senses content;
When the senses are well content,
wellness of the mind is attained.

Mental concentration springs up
when one's mind is well and serene,
And practice of trance advances
when concentration grips one's mind.

And by the advancement of trance,
one attains the dharmas by which
Is attained that supreme state hard to obtain,
a state that is unaging, immortal, and calm."

12.105

tasmād āhāra|mūlo 'yam
 upāya iti niścayah
 āhāra|karaṇe dhīraḥ
 kṛtv" ā|mita|matir matim.

snāto Nairāñjanā|tīrād
 uttatāra śanaiḥ kṛṣṇah
 bhakty" āvanata|śākh"|"āgrair
 datta|hastas taṭa|drumaiḥ.

atha gop'|ādhipa|sutā
 daivatair abhicoditā
 udbhūta|hṛday'|ānandā
 tatra Nandabal" āgamat—

12.110 sita|śāṅkh'|ōjjvala|bhujā
 nīla|kambala|vāsinī
 sa|phena|mālā|nīl'|āmbur
 Yamun" ēva sarid varā.

sā śraddhā|vardhita|prītir
 vikasal|locan'|ōtpalā
 śirasā praṇipaty' āinam
 grāhayām āsa pāyasam.

kṛtvā tad|upabhogena
 prāpta|janma|phalām sa tām
 bodhi|prāptau samartha 'bhūt
 samtarpiṭa|ṣad|indriyah.

Having concluded, therefore, that
this process was rooted in food,
steadfast, and with boundless wisdom,
he resolved to partake of food.

When he had taken his bath, he climbed slowly up
the bank of the Nairáñjana in his feeble state,
and the trees on the bank gave him a helping hand,
by devoutly lowering the tips of their boughs.

Then, the daughter of a cowherd chief,
Nanda·bala, impelled by the gods,
the joy of her heart spilling over,
arrived at that spot—

wearing a dark-blue garment,
her arms sparkling with white shells,
she looked like Yámuna, best of rivers,
with its dark-blue water enwreathed with foam.

12.110

Her joy enhanced by her faith,
her lotus-eyes opened wide,
she bowed her head before him
and made him take the milk rice.

By eating that he caused her to
obtain the reward of her birth;
he became, with his six senses content,
able to attain the Awakening.

paryāpt' |āpyāna|mūrtiś ca
 s' |ārdham sva|yaśasā muniḥ
 kānti|dhairyे babbhār' āikaḥ
 śaś' |ānīk' |ārṇavayor dvayoh.

«āvṛtta» iti vijñāya
 tam jahuḥ pañca bhikṣavah
 maniṣinam iv' ātmānam
 nirmuktam pañca dhātavah.

12.115 vyavasāya|dvitīyo 'tha
 śādval' |āstīrṇa|bhūtalām
 so 'svattha|mūlam prayayau
 bodhāya kṛta|niścayah.

tatas tadānīm gaja|rāja|vikramah
 pada|svanen' ân|upamena bodhitah
 mahā|muner āgata|bodhi|niścayo
 jagāda Kālo bhujag'|ottamah stutim:

«yathā, mune, tvac|caraṇ' |āvapīḍitā
 muhur muhur niṣṭanat' īva medinī
 yathā ca te rājati sūryavat prabhā
 dhruvam tvam iṣṭam phalam adya bhokṣyase.

His body along with his fame
 having reached complete amplitude,
 the sage in his single person
 bore the stability and charm
 of the ocean and the moon.

The five mendicants left him,
 thinking he had relapsed,
 as the five elements leave
 the wise and released soul.

Then, with resolve as his companion,
12.115
 resolving to attain Awakening,
 he repaired to the foot of a bo-tree,
 under which the ground was covered with grass.

At that time, then, Kala, the best of snakes,
 with the valor of the elephant king,
 awakened by the unrivaled sound of his feet,
 knowing the sage's resolve to be awakened,
 uttered this eulogy:

“As, O sage, the earth thunders again and again
 at the pounding of your feet;
 As your radiance, likewise, shines forth like the sun,
 so surely you will enjoy
 the result you wish today.

yathā bhramantyo divi cāṣa|pañktayah
 pradakṣinam tvāṁ, kamal'ākṣa, kurvate,
 yathā ca saumyā divi vānti vāyavas
 tvam adya Buddho niyatam bhaviṣyasi.»

tato bhujāṅga|pravareṇa samstutas
 trṇāny upādāya śucīni lāvakāt
 kṛta|pratijño niśasāda bodhaye
 mahā|taror mūlam upāśritah śuceḥ.

12.120 tataḥ sa paryāñkam a|kampyam uttamam
 babandha supt'|ōraga|bhoga|piṇḍitam
 «bhinadmi tāvad bhuvi n' āitad āsanam
 na yāmi yāvat kṛta|kṛtyatām» iti.

tato yayur mudam a|tulām div'|āukaso
 vavāśire na mr̥ga|gaṇāḥ na pakṣināḥ
 na sasvanur vana|taravo 'nil'|āhatāḥ
 kṛ'|āsane bhagavati niścit'|ātmāni.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye 'rāḍa|darśano nāma
 dvādaśāḥ sargah.

As the row of blue jays fluttering in the sky
 are flying around you, O lotus-eyed one,
 keeping you to their right,
 As the gentle breezes are blowing in the sky,
 so surely you will become
 an Awakened One, today."

Praised in this manner by that best of snakes,
 from a reaper he then obtained some grass,
 repaired to the foot of that great pure tree,
 and sat down with the vow
 to become awakened.

Then, he took up the posture with folded legs,
 supreme, unshakable, drawn together
 like the coils of a sleeping snake, thinking:

12.120

"I'll not break this posture on earth
 until I have fulfilled my task."

Then, heavenly beings felt unparalleled joy,
 the birds and the throngs of beasts made no noise,
 the forest trees did not rustle
 though shaken by the wind,

when the Lord took up his posture
 firm in his resolve.

Thus ends the twelfth canto named "The Meeting with Aráda"
 of the great poem "Life of the Buddha."



CANTO 13
VICTORY OVER MARA

13.1

TASMIN VIMOKṢĀYA kṛta|pratijñe
 rāja'|ṛṣi|varṇśa|prabhave maha”|ṛṣau
 tatr’ ṣopaviṣṭe prajaharṣa lokas
 tatrāsa sad|dharma|riputu Māraḥ.

yam Kāma|devam̄ pravandanti loke
 citr’|āyudham̄ puṣpa|śaram̄ tath” āiva,
 kāma|pracār’|ādhipatim̄ tam̄ eva
 mokṣa|dvīṣam̄ Māram udāharanti.

Tasy’ ātmaljā Vibhrama|Harṣa|Darpās
 tisro ’ratī|Prīti|Tr̄ṣaś ca kanyāḥ
 papracchur enam̄ manaso vikāram̄
 sa tāmś ca tāś c’ āiva vaco ’bhuvāca:

«asau munir niścaya|varma bibhrat
 sattv’|āyudham̄ buddhi|śaram̄ vikṛṣya
 jigīṣur āste viṣayān madīyān,
 tasmād ayam̄ me manaso viṣādah.

13.5

yadi hy asau mām abhibhūya yāti
 lokāya c’ ākhyāty apavarga|mārgam,
 śūnyas tato ’yam viṣayo mam’ ādya
 vṛttāc cyutasy’ ēva Videha|bhartuh.

tad yāvad ev’ āisa na labdha|cakṣur
 mad|gocare tiṣṭhati yāvad eva,
 yāsyāmi tāvad vratam asya bhettum̄
 setum̄ nadī|vega iv’ āti|vṛddhah.»

WHEN THAT GREAT seer, who was born in a line
of royal seers, sat down there with the pledge
to win release, the world rejoiced, and yet
Mara, foe of true dharma, shook with fright.

The one that people in the world call god Kama,
the one with flower arrows and colorful bow,
the one who oversees the working of passions,
that same one they call Mara, the foe of release.

His three sons—Fluster, Thrill, and Pride,
and his three girls—Discontent, Delight, and Thirst,
asked why his mind was so troubled;
he said this to his boys and girls:

“That sage wearing the armor of resolve,
drawing the bow of courage
with the arrow of insight,
Sits there desiring to conquer my realms;
that’s why my mind is despondent.

For, if he succeeds in vanquishing me,
proclaims to the world the path to release,
Then today this my realm will be empty,
like that of the Vidéha king
when he strayed from the correct path.*

So, while he has not yet obtained insight,
while he still remains within my domain,
I will proceed there to break up his vow,
as a river’s swollen current a dike.”

tato dhanuh puṣṭa|mayaṁ gṛhitvā
 śarān jagan|moha|karāmś ca pañca
 so ’svattha|mūlam sa|suto ’bhyagacchad
 a|svāsthya|kārī manasaḥ prajānām.

atha praśāntam munim āsana|sthām
 pāram titiṛṣum bhava|sāgarasya
 viṣajya savyam karam āyudh’āgre
 krīdan śareṇ’ ēdam uvāca Māraḥ:

«uttīṣṭha, bhoḥ kṣatriya, mṛtyu|bhīta!
 cara sva|dharmaṁ, tyaja mokṣa|dharmam;
 bāṇaiś ca yajñaiś ca vinīya lokam
 lokāt padam prāpnuhi Vāsavasya.

13.10 panthā hi niryātum ayam yaśasyo
 yo vāhitah pūrvatamair nar’|ēndraiḥ;
 jātasya rāja’|ṛṣi|kule viśāle
 bhaikṣakam a|ślāghyam idam prapattum.

ath’ ādyā n’ ôttiṣṭhasi, niścit’|ātman,
 bhava sthiro, mā vimucaḥ pratijñām!
 may” ôdyato hy eṣa śarah sa eva
 yah Šūrpake mīna|ripau vimuktaḥ.

sprṣṭah sa c’ ānena katham cid Aiḍah
 Somasya napt” āpy abhavad vicittah,
 sa c’ ābhavac Chantanur a|svatantrah;
 kṣīne yuge kim bata dur|balo ’nyah?

Then, taking up his bow made of flowers
and the five arrows that delude the world,
the one who troubles the minds of people
went to the foot of the bo-tree
accompanied by his children.

Then, placing his left hand on the bow tip
and fondling an arrow, Mara said
to the sage seated calm and motionless,
seeking to cross the ocean of existence:

“Rise up, O Warrior, afraid of death!
Follow the dharma that’s your own,
abandon the dharma of release;
By subduing the world with arrows and rites,
from this world you will attain Indra’s realm.

For to travel along this path brings fame,
a path traversed by the most ancient kings;
Begging brings ignominy to one born
in a great lineage of royal seers.

Or if you, resolute man, won’t rise up today,
remain steadfast, do not recant your pledge!
For I have raised this, the same arrow that I hurled
at Shúrpaka, the enemy of fish!*

Scarcely grazed by it,
Aida went out of his mind,
although he was Moon’s grandson;
and Shántanu lost his self-will;*
How much more some feeble man,
in this most decadent age?

13.10

tat kṣipram uttiṣṭha, labhasva samjñāṁ!
 bāṇo hy ayam tiṣṭhati lelihānah.
 priyā|vidheyeṣu rati|priyeṣu
 yaṁ cakravākeṣv iva n' ôtsṛjāmi.»

ity evam|ukto 'pi yadā nir|āsthō
 n' āiv' āsanāṁ Śākyā|munir bibheda,
 śaram tato 'smai visasarja Māraḥ
 kanyāś ca kṛtvā purataḥ sutāmś ca.

13.15 tasmīms tu bāṇe 'pi sa vipramukte
 cakāra n' āsthām na dhṛteś cacāla;
 dr̥ṣṭvā tath" āinām viśasāda Māraś
 cintā|parītaś ca śanair jagāda:

«Śail'|ēndra|putrīm prati yena viddho
 devo 'pi Śambhuś calito babhūva,
 na cintayaty eṣa tam eva bāṇam!
 kiṁ syād a|citto? na śaraḥ sa eṣaḥ?

tasmād ayam n' ārhati puṣpa|bāṇām
 na harṣāṇām n' āpi rater niyogam,
 arhaty ayam bhūta|gaṇair a|saumyaiḥ
 samitrāsan'|ātarjana|tāḍanāni.»

So, rise up quick and come to your senses,
 for this arrow is set, licking its chops!
 I won't shoot men servile to their lovers
 and delighting in sexual pleasures,
 as I won't shoot at *chakra-vaka* ducks."

When the sage of the Shakyas paid no heed
 and did not even give up his posture,
 even after he was so admonished,
 Mara then discharged the arrow at him,
 placing his sons and girls in front of him.

But even after he shot the arrow at him,
 he paid no heed and did not veer from his resolve;
 seeing him thus, Mara was despondent,
 and, filled with anxiety, he spoke softly:

"Shambhu, although a god, was stirred with love
 for the daughter of the mountain
 when struck with this arrow;*
 Yet this one takes no notice of that same arrow!
 Has he no heart?
 Or is this not the same arrow?

He's not a suitable object, therefore,
 for the flower-arrow, for arousal,
 or even to rouse erotic passion;
 He's only fit to be frightened, threatened,
 and beaten up by the fierce throngs of fiends."

sasmāra Māraś ca tataḥ svāśainyam
 vighnam śame Śākyamuneś cikīrṣan,
 nān”|āśrayāś c’ ânucarāḥ parīyuḥ
 śala|druma|prāsa|gād’|âsi|hastāḥ—

varāha|mīn’|âsva|khar’|ôṣṭra|vaktrā,
 vyāghra’|rkṣa|simha|dvirad’|ânanāś ca,
 ek’|ēkṣaṇā n’|âika|mukhāś tri|śīrṣā,
 lamb’|ôdarāś c’ âiva pṛṣ’|ôdarāś ca;

13.20 a|jānu|sakthā, ghaṭa|jānavaś ca,
 daṁṣṭr’|āyudhāś c’ âiva, nakh’|āyudhāś ca,
 karaṇka|vaktrā, bahu|mūrtayaś ca,
 bhagn’|ārdha|vaktrāś ca, mahā|mukhāś ca;

bhasm’|āruṇā, lohita|bindu|citrāḥ,
 khaṭvāṅga|hastā, hari|dhūmra|keśāḥ,
 lambda|srajo, vāraṇa|lamba|karṇāś,
 carm’|āmbarāś c’ âiva, nir|ambarāś ca;

No sooner, then, had Mara thought of his army,
wishing to hinder the calm of the Shakya sage,
than his cohorts in diverse forms gathered round him,
carrying in their hands spears, trees, javelins, clubs,
and swords—

some with faces of boars, fish, horses, donkeys,
and camels,

some with the guise of tigers, bears, lions,
and elephants,

some with one eye, some with many mouths,

some with three heads,

some with enormous stomachs,

some with spotted bellies;

some without knees, some without thighs,

13.20

some with knees the size of pots,

some armed with tusks, some armed with talons,

some with skulls as faces, some with many bodies,

some with half their faces torn off,

some with colossal mouths;

some having the color of ash,

some with blood-red spots,

some carrying ascetic staves with skulls at the top,

some with hair smoke-colored like a monkey's,

some with hanging garlands,

some with ears as big as an elephant's,

some wearing animal skins, some completely naked;

śvet'|ârdha|vaktrā, harit'|ârdha|kāyāś,
tāmrāś ca, dhūmrā, harayo, 'sitāś ca,
vyāl'|ôttar'|āsaṅga|bhujāś tath" âiva,
praghuṣṭa|ghaṇṭ" |ākula|mekhalāś ca;

tāla|pramāṇāś ca gṛhīta|śūlā,
damṣṭrā|karālāś ca śīśu|pramāṇāḥ,
urabhra|vaktrāś ca viham̄gam'|âkṣā,
mārjāra|vaktrāś ca manusya|kāyāḥ;

prakīrṇa|keśāḥ, śikhino, 'rdha|muṇḍā,
rakt'|âmbarā, vyākula|veṣṭanāś ca,
prahṛṣṭa|vaktrā, bhr̄kuṭī|mukhāś ca,
tejo|harāś c' âiva, mano|harāś ca.

13.25 ke cid vrajanto bhr̄sam āavalgur,
anyo|nyam āpupluvre tath" ânye,
cikrīdūr ākāśa|gatāś ca ke cit,
ke cic ca cerus taru|mastakesu;

nanarta kaś cid bhramayams tri|śūlam,
kaś cid vīpusphūrja gadām vikarṣan,
harṣena kaś cid vṛṣavan nanarda,
kaś cit prajajvāla tanū|ruhebhyāḥ.

evam|vidhā bhūta|gaṇāḥ samantāt
tad bodhi|mūlam parivārya tashuh
jighṛkṣavaś c' âiva jighāṁsavaś ca
bhartur niyogaṁ paripālayantah.

some with half their faces white,
some with half their bodies green,
some copper-colored, some smoke-colored,
some tawny, some black,
some wearing snakes as their upper garments,
some with clanging bells hanging from their girdles;

some as tall as palmyra trees and carrying spears,
some the size of children with protruding fangs,
some with faces of sheep and the eyes of birds,
some with faces of cats and the bodies of men;

some with disheveled hair, some wearing topknots,
some with half-shaven heads,
some wearing red clothes,
some with their turbans in disarray,
some with excited faces, some with frowning faces,
some draining the energy, some drawing the mind;

some leapt wildly as they dashed around,
some jumped upon one another,
some frolicked rising up into the sky,
some hopped across the tree tops;

one danced, brandishing a trident,
one roared, dragging a club,
one bellowed with joy, like a bull,
one blazed fire from every hair.

13.25

Throngs of fiends of these kinds stood encircling
the foot of that bo-tree on every side,
eager to seize and eager to kill,
awaiting their master's orders.

tam prekṣya Mārasya ca pūrvā|rātre
 Śākyā|rṣabhasy' āiva ca yuddha|kālam—
 na dyauś cakāśe, pr̄thivī cakampe,
 prajajvaluś c' āiva diśah sa|śabdāḥ;
 viśvag vavau vāyur udīrṇa|vegas,
 tārā na rejur, na babbhau śaś|ānkaḥ,
 tamaś ca bhūyo vitatāna rātriḥ,
 sarve ca samcuksuhire samudrāḥ.

13.30 mahibhṛto dharmā|parāś ca nāgā
 mahā|muner vighnam a|mṛṣyamāṇāḥ
 Māram̄ prati krodhā|vivṛtta|netrā
 niḥśāśvasuś c' āiva, jajr̄mbhire ca.

śuddh'|ādhivāsā vibudha'|rṣayas tu
 sad|dharma|siddhy|artham abhipravṛttāḥ
 Māre 'nukampām̄ manasā pracakrur
 virāga|bhāvāt tu na roṣam īyuh.

tad bodhi|mūlam̄ samavekṣya kīrṇam̄
 himṣ"jātmānā Māra|balena tena
 dharm'jātmabhir loka|vimokṣa|kāmair
 babhūva hāhā|kṛtam antarikṣe.

upaplavam̄ dharma|vidhes tu tasya
 dr̄ṣṭvā sthitam̄ Māra|balam̄ maha"jṛṣih
 na cuksubhe n' āpi yayau vikāram̄
 madhye gavām̄ simha iv' ḥopaviṣṭah.

Seeing in the early night the time of battle
raging between Mara and the bull of Shakyas—

the sky lost its glimmer and the earth shook,
the directions blazed forth with a loud sound,
the wind raged wildly in all directions,
stars did not sparkle, the moon did not shine,
the night unfolded a denser darkness,
and all the oceans began to shudder.

The serpents given to dharma who bore the earth,
unable to bear that hindrance to the great sage,
hissed aloud, and at Mara they unfurled their hoods,
their eyes rolling with anger.

13.30

But the divine seers residing in the pure realm,
engaged in gaining success in the true dharma,
displayed compassion toward Mara in their minds,
and, because they were devoid of passion,
did not give way to anger.

Seeing the foot of the bo-tree besieged
by those murderous forces of Mara,
those beings who were devoted to dharma,
and who longed for the release of the world,
cried out "Ha! Ha!" in the sky.

But when the great seer saw Mara's forces
ready to upset the course of dharma,
he neither trembled nor was he perturbed,
like a lion seated among cows.

Māras tato bhūta|camūm udīrṇām
 ājñāpayām āsa bhayāya tasya;
 svaiḥ svaiḥ prabhāvair atha s” âsyā senā
 tad|dhairyā|bhedāya matim cakāra.

13.35 ke cic calan|n’|âika|vilambi|jihvās,
 tiksṇ’|âgra|damṣṭrā hari|maṇḍal’|âkṣāḥ,
 vidārit’|âsyāḥ sthira|śaṅku|karṇāḥ—
 samṛtrāsayantah kila nāma tasthuḥ.

tebhyaḥ sthitebhyaḥ sa tathā|vidhebhyaḥ
 rūpeṇa bhāvena ca dāruṇebhyaḥ
 na vivyathe n’ ôdvivije maha”|ṛṣiḥ
 krīdat|su|bālebhya iv’ ôddhatebhyaḥ—

kaś cit tato roṣa|vivṛtta|drṣṭis
 tasmai gadām udyamayām cakāra
 tastambha bāhuḥ sa|gadas tato ’sya
 Puraṇdarasy’ ēva purā sa|vajrah.

ke cit samudyamya śilās tarūṁś ca
 viṣehire n’ âiva munau vimoktum;
 petuh sa|vrksāḥ sa|śilās tath” âiva
 vajr’|âvabhagnā iva Vindhya|pādāḥ.

Then to his frenzied army of fiends,
 Mara gave orders to frighten him;
 his troops, then, each with its special power,
 set their minds to breaking his resolve.

They stood there trying to frighten him—

13.35

some with multiple tongues
 dangling and quivering,
 some with sharp and pointed fangs,
 some with eyes like the sun's orb,
 some with gaping mouths,
 some with ears upright like spikes.

As they stood in such guise,
 dreadful in form and mien,
 the great seer was no more alarmed
 or frightened of them
 than of little children ebullient as they play—

then, one, his eyes rolling with rage,
 lifted up his club at the sage,
 but the hand holding the club froze,
 like Puran-dara's hand of old
 that was holding the bolt.

Some lifted rocks and trees at him,
 but could not hurl them at the sage;
 they fell down with the trees and rocks,
 like the outcrops of the Vindhya
 when they're struck by the bolt.*

kaiś cit samutpatya nabho vimuktāḥ
 śilāś ca vṛkṣāś ca paraśvadhāś ca
 tasthur nabhasy eva na c' āvapetuḥ
 saṃdhy" |ābhra|pādā iva n' |āika|varṇāḥ.

13.40 cikṣepa tasy' ḍipatam anyaḥ
 kadaṅgaram parvata|śrīga|mātram,
 yan|mukta|mātram gagana|sthāna eva
 tasy' ānubhāvāc chata|dhā paphāla.

kaś cij jvalann arka iv' ḍiditāḥ khād
 aṅgāra|varṣam mahad utsasarja
 cūrnāni cāmikara|kandarāṇām
 kalp'|ātyaye Merur iva pradīptaḥ.

tad bodhi|mūle pravikīryamāṇam
 aṅgāra|varṣam tu sa|visphulingam
 maitrī|vihārād ṛṣi|sattamasya
 babhūva rakt'|ōtpala|pattra|varṣaḥ.

śarīra|citta|vyasan' |ātapaīs tair
 evam|vidhais taiś ca nipātyamanaiḥ
 n' āiv' āsanāc Chākyā|muniś cacāla
 sva|niścayam bandhum iv' ḍopaguhyā.

ath' āpare nirjigilur mukhebhyāḥ
 sarpān vijirṇebhya iva drumebhyāḥ;
 te mantra|baddhā iva tat|samīpe
 na śāśvasur n' ḍotsasṛpur na celuh.

Some, leaping up into the sky,
hurled at him rocks, axes, and trees;
but they hung in the sky and did not fall,
like the multi-hued rays of twilight clouds.

Another flung a blazing stack of straw,
as large as a mountain peak;
but as it was thrown and still in the sky,
it shattered into a hundred pieces
by his miraculous power.

13.40

One, blazing like the rising sun, released
a great shower of burning coals from the sky,
like mount Meru ablaze at eon's end
showering lava fragments from golden rifts.

But that shower of burning coals with flying sparks,
sprinkling around the foot of the bo-tree,
became a shower of red lotus petals
by the universal benevolence
practiced by that foremost of seers.

While he was assaulted with these tribulations
and torture of body and mind of various kinds,
the Shakya sage did not waver from his posture,
guarding his resolve as if it were a kinsman.

Still others, then, disgorged snakes
from their mouths
as if from rotten tree trunks;
but in his presence those snakes did not hiss,
they did not raise their heads or move about,
as if tied down by a spell.

13.45 bhūtv” āpare vāri|dharā bṛhantah
 sa|vidyutah s’|āśani|caṇḍa|ghoṣah
 tasmin drume tatyajur aśma|varṣam
 tat puṣpa|varṣam ruciram babhūva.

cāpe ’tha bāṇo nihito ’pareṇa
 jajvāla tatr’ āiva na niṣpapāta,
 an|iśvarasy’ ātmani dhūyamāno
 dur|maraṇasy’ ēva narasya manyuh.

pañc’|ēśavo ’nyena tu vipramuktās
 tasthur nabhasy eva munau na petuh,
 saṃsāra|bhīror viṣaya|pravṛttau
 pañc’|ēndriyān’ īva parīksakasya.

jighāṃsay” ânyaḥ prasasāra ruṣṭo
 gadām gr̥hitv” ābhimukho maha”|rṣeh;
 so ’|prāpta|kāmo vi|vaśah papāta
 doṣeṣv iv’ ân|artha|kareṣu lokah.

strī megha|kālī tu kapāla|hastā
 kartum maha”|rṣeh kila citta|moham
 babhrāma tatr’ ā|niyatam na tasthau
 cal’|ātmano buddhir iv’ āgameṣu.

13.50 kaś cit pradiptam praṇidhāya cakṣur
 netr’|āgnin” āśi|viṣavad didhaksuh;
 tatr’ āiva n’ āśinam ḥṣim dadarśa
 kām’|ātmakah śreya iv’ ôpadiṣṭam.

Yet others, transmuted into vast clouds,
with lightning and fierce sound of thunderbolts,
let loose a shower of stones on that tree;
but it became transformed into
a lovely shower of flowers.

13.45

Another fixed an arrow to his bow,
but it flared up there and did not fly off,
like the anger of a poor ill-humored man
igniting within himself.

And five arrows shot by another one
stood still in the sky and did not fall on the sage,
like the five senses before the objects of sense
in a wise man scared of samsaric life.

Another, enraged, rushed at the great sage,
grabbing a club and intending to kill;
but he fell helpless, his aim unattained,
in much the same way as the world descends
into vices that thwart its goals.

A woman, black as a cloud and carrying a skull,
in order to seduce the mind of that great seer,
flitted about there unrestrained and did not halt,
like a fickle man's mind amidst scriptural texts.

One, wishing to burn him with the fire of his eye,
like a noxious snake, fixed on him his blazing gaze;
but he did not perceive the seer seated right there,
like a man full of passion the ultimate good
that had been clearly pointed out to him.

13.50

gurvīm śilām udyamayaṁs tath” ânyaḥ
 śāśrāma mogham vihataḥ|prayatnaḥ
 nih|śreyasam jñāna|samādhi|gamyam
 kāya|klamair dharmam iv’ āptu|kāmaḥ.

tarakṣu|simh’|ākṛtayas tath” ânye
 praṇeduruccair mahataḥ praṇādān,
 sattvāni yaiḥ saṃcukucuḥ samantād
 vajr’|āhatā dyauḥ phalat’ iti matvā.

mṛgā gajāś c’ ārtā|ravān srjanto
 vidudruvuś c’ āiva nililyire ca
 rātrau ca tasyām ahan’ īva digbhyah
 khagā ruvantah paripetur ārtāḥ.

teṣām praṇādais tu tathā|vidhais taiḥ
 sarveṣu bhūteṣv api kampiteṣu
 munir na tatrāsa na saṃcukoca,
 ravair Garutmān iva vāyasānām.

13.55 bhay’|āvahebhyaḥ pariṣad|gaṇebhyo
 yathā yathā n’ āiva munir bibhāya,
 tathā tathā dharmaḥ|bhṛtām sa|patnaḥ
 śokāc ca roṣāc ca sasāda Māraḥ.

bhūtam tataḥ kim cid a|dr̥ṣya|rūpam
 viśiṣṭaḥ|bhūtam gagana|sthām eva
 dr̥ṣṭva” rṣaye drugdham a|vaira|rūṣṭam
 Māram babhāṣe mahatā svareṇa:

Another, likewise, tried to lift a heavy rock,
but he toiled in vain with his efforts frustrated,
like one seeking to win through bodily fatigue
dharma, the ultimate good, that can be attained
only through knowledge and trance.

Others also, in the guise of lions and hyenas,
thunderously roared out deafening roars,
at which animals all around recoiled in fear,
thinking that the sky itself was being split apart
by the strike of a thunderbolt.

Deer and elephants ran helter-skelter,
and hid themselves, howling cries of distress;
during that night, birds flew round in the sky
crying out in distress, as if it were day.

Even though all beings shuddered
at such bellowing of theirs,
the sage trembled not, nor did he recoil,
like Gáruda at the clamor of crows.

The less the sage was fearful of that troop of fiends,
who were attempting to make him afraid,
the more Mara, foe of those who uphold dharma,
became despondent with sorrow and rage.

13.55

Then, a certain being standing in the sky,
high in station, invisible in form,
seeing Mara's malice toward the seer
and his unprovoked animosity,
spoke to him in a loud voice:

«mogham śramam n' ārhasi Māra kartum,
 himṣr' ātmatām utsṛja, gaccha śarma;
 n' āiṣa tvayā kampayitum hi śakyo
 mahā|girir Merur iv' ânilena.

apy uṣṇa|bhāvam jvalanaḥ prajahyād,
 āpo dravatvam, pṛthivī sthiratvam,
 an|eka|kalp'|ācita|puṇya|karmā
 na tv eva jahyād vyavasāyam eṣaḥ.

yo niścayo hy asya, parākramaś ca,
 tejaś ca yad, yā ca dayā prajāsu,
 a|prāpya n' ôtthāsyati tattvam eṣa
 tamāṁsy a|hātv” ēva sahasra|raśmiḥ.

13.60 kāṣṭham hi mathnan labhate hut'|āśam,
 bhūmiṁ khanan vindati c' āpi toyam,
 nirbandhinaḥ kiṁ cana n' āsty a|sādhyam;
 nyāyena yuktam ca kṛtam ca sarvam.

tal lokam ārtam karuṇāyamāno
 rogeṣu rāg'|ādiṣu vartamānam
 mahā|bhiṣān n'|ārhati vighnam eṣa
 jñān'|āuṣadḥ'|ārtham parikhidyamānah.

"Don't toil in vain, Mara, give up
 your murderous intent and go home;
 For you can no more shake this man,
 than a gust of wind
 the great Meru mount.

Fire may well give up its fiery nature,
 water its fluidity, earth its stability,
 But this man will not give up his resolve,
 having piled up merit over countless eons.

For his resolve, valor, and energy,
 and his compassion for creatures are such
 That he'll not rise without grasping the truth,
 as the sun without dispelling the dark.

For one obtains fire by rubbing the wood,
 and one finds water by digging the earth;
 There is nothing that is impossible
 for the man who is persistent;
 Everything can be accomplished,
 when it is done the proper way.

In his compassion for this anguished world,
 mired in diseases such as passion,
 As he toils to find the medicine of knowledge,
 it's not proper to hinder this great physician.

hṛte ca loke bahubhiḥ ku|mārgaiḥ
 san|mārgam anvicchatī yah śrameṇa,
 sa daiśikah kṣobhayitum na yuktam
 su|deśikah sārtha iva pranaṣṭe.

sattveṣu naṣṭeṣu mah”|ândha|kāre
 jñāna|pradīpaḥ kriyamāṇa eṣaḥ
 āryasya nirvāpayitum na sādhu,
 prajvālyamānas tamas’ īva dīpaḥ.

dṛṣṭvā ca samsāra|maye mah”|āughe
 magnam jagat pāram a|vindamānam
 yaś c’ êdam uttārayitum pravṛttah,
 kaś cintayet tasya tu pāpam āryah?

13.65 kṣamā|śipho dhairyā|vigadha|mūlaś
 cāritra|puṣpah smṛti|buddhi|śākhaḥ
 jñāna|drumo dharma|phala|pradātā
 n’ ôtpāṭanam hy arhati vardhamānah.

baddhām dṛḍhaiś cetasi moha|pāśair
 yasya prajām mokṣayitum manīṣā,
 tasmin jighāṁsā tava n’ ôpapannā
 śrānte jagad|bandhana|mokṣa|hetoh.

When the world is swept along crooked paths,
 he toils in search of the right path;
 So, it's no more right to harass that guide
 than to harass a skilled navigator
 while the caravan is lost.

When creatures are lost in the great darkness,
 this man is being made a lamp of wisdom;
 It's no more right for you, a gentleman,
 to extinguish it, than to extinguish
 a lamp set up to shine in the darkness.

Seeing the world plunged in the great flood
 of samsara
 and unable to find the farther shore,
 This man is working to ferry that world across;
 what gentleman would entertain
 wicked thoughts against him?

For it's not proper to cut down
 this flourishing tree of knowledge,
 That provides the fruits of dharma,
 whose fibers are patience,
 whose deep roots are resolve,
 whose flowers are good conduct,
 And whose boughs are mindfulness and wisdom.

His intent is to free creatures, whose minds
 are bound tight by the bonds of delusion;
 It behooves you not to seek to kill him
 who labors to free the world from its bonds.

bodhāya karmāṇī hi yāny anena
 kṛtāni, teṣāṁ niyato 'dya kālah;
 sthāne tath" âsmiñn upaviṣṭa eṣa
 yath" āiva pūrve munayas, tath" āiva.

eṣā hi nābhir vasudhā|talasya
 kṛtsnena yuktā parameṇa dhāmnā;
 bhūmer ato 'nyo 'sti hi na pradeśo
 vegam samādher viṣaheta yo 'sya.

tan mā kṛthāḥ śokam, upehi śāntim,
 mā bhūn mahimnā tava Māra mānah;
 viśrambhitum na kṣamam a|dhruvā śrīś,
 cale pade vismayam abhyupaiṣi.»

13.70 tataḥ sa samīrutyā ca tasya tad vaco
 mahā|muneḥ preksya ca niṣ|prakampatām
 jagāma Māro vimano hat'|ôdyamah
 śarair jagac cetasi yair vihanyate.

gata|praharṣā viphali|kṛta|śramā
 praviddha|pāṣāṇa|kaḍaṅgara|drumā
 diśah pradudrāva tato 'sya sā camūr
 hat'|āśray" ēva dviṣatā dviṣac|camūḥ.

For today is the time when the deeds he has done
 to obtain Awakening will bear fruit;
 At this spot he remains in this manner seated,
 in the same way as sages of the past.

For this is the navel of th' earth's surface,
 filled with the highest force in its fullness;
 There is no other place on earth, therefore,
 that can bear the intensity of trance.

So, do not be sad, calm yourself, Mara,
 do not become proud because of your might;
 Sovereign power is fickle, don't trust in it;
 you are puffed up as your base is reeling."

After he listened to those words of his,
 and saw that the great sage couldn't be shaken,
 then Mara went away broken-hearted,
 his efforts struck down by the same arrows
 with which the world is smitten in the heart.

13.70

Then his troops fled in every direction,
 their euphoria gone, their toil made fruitless,
 the rocks, logs, and trees all scattered around,
 like enemy troops when their enemy
 has killed their chief.

dravati sa|paripakṣe nirjite puṣpa|ketau
jayati jitā|tamaske nīrajaske maha”|ṛṣau
yuvatir iva sahāsā dyauś cakāśe sa|candrā
surabhi ca jala|garbhāḥ puṣpa|varṣam papāta.

iti Buddhacarite mahā|kāvye ’śva|ghoṣa|kṛte Māra|vijayo nāma
trayodaśah sargah.

As the flower-bannered one fled defeated
 along with his cohorts,
passion-free, the great seer stood victorious
 and dispelling darkness,
the sky sparkled with the moon,
 like a girl with a smile,
and a shower of flowers fell
 fragrant and water-filled.

Thus ends the thirteenth canto named "Victory over Mara"
 of the great poem "Life of the Buddha"
 composed by Ashva·ghosha.



CANTO 14
THE AWAKENING

14.1

TATO MĀRA|balam̄ jitvā
 dhairyenā ca śamena ca
 param'ârtham̄ vijijñāsuḥ
 sa dadhyau dhyāna|kovidah.

sarveṣu dhyāna|vidhiṣu
 prāpya c' āīsvaryam uttamam
 sasmāra prathame yāme
 pūrvajanma|paramparām.

«amutr' āham ayam nāma,
 cyutas tasmād ih' āgataḥ—»
 iti janma|sahasrāṇi
 sasmār' ânubhavann iva.

smṛtvā janma ca mṛtyum ca
 tāsu tās' ūpapattiṣu,
 tataḥ sattveṣu kāruṇyam
 cakāra karuṇ”|ātmakah:

14.5

«kr̄tv” ēha svaljan’|ōtsargam̄
 punar anyatra ca kriyāḥ*
 a|trāṇaḥ khalu loko ’yam
 paribhr̄amati cakravat.»

ity evam smaratas tasya
 babhūva niyat'|ātmanaḥ
 kadalī|garbha|nihsārah
 saṃsāra iti niścayah.

THEN, AFTER defeating Mara's army
by resolve and tranquility,
that expert in trance went into a trance,
seeking to know the highest truth.

After achieving full control
over all the techniques of trance,
he recalled during the first watch
the series of his former births.

“Over there I had this name;
Departing thence I came here—”

in this way he recalled thousands of births,
as if he were living through them again.

After recalling births and deaths
in all the various rebirth states,
that man, full of compassion, then
felt compassion toward all beings:

“Abandoning its kinsmen here,
going again to another place,*
The world here is without refuge,
and rolls round and round like a wheel.”

As that resolute man recalled
thus the past, he became convinced
that samsara had no substance,
like the core of banana trees.

dvitīye tv āgate yāme
 so 'dvitīya|parākramah
 divyam̄ lebhe param̄ cakṣuh
 sarva|cakṣuṣmatām̄ varah.

tatas tena sa divyena
 pariśuddhena cakṣuṣā
 dadarśa nikhilam̄ lokam
 ādarśa iva nir|male.

sattvānām̄ paśyatas tasya
 nikṛṣṭ' |ōtkṛṣṭa|karmaṇām̄
 pracyutim̄ c' ḫopapattim̄ ca
 vavṛḍhe karuṇ" |ātmatā—

14.10 «ime duṣkrta|karmāṇah
 prāṇino yānti dur|gatim;
 ime 'nye śubha|karmāṇah
 pratiṣṭhante tri|piṣṭape.

upapannāh pratibhaye
 narake bhr̄ṣā|dāruṇe
 amī duḥkhair bahu|vidhaiḥ
 pīḍyante kṛpaṇam̄, bata—

pāyyante kvathitam̄ ke cid
 agni|varṇam ayo|rāsam;
 āropyan te ruvanto 'nye
 niṣṭapta|stambham̄ āyasam;

And when the second watch appeared,
the one whose valor was unmatched,
the best of all who possess sight,
obtained the highest divine sight.

And then with that sight,
spotless and divine,
he saw the entire world,
as if in a stainless looking glass.

As he witnessed the births and deaths
of beings doing base and lofty deeds,
his compassion waxed ever great—

"These living beings who perform evil deeds
end up in miserable states;
But these others who perform virtuous deeds,
rise up to the triple heaven.

14.10

Born in a fearsome hell,
full of dreadful horrors,
The former, alas, are tortured cruelly
with many torments of diverse kinds—

some are made to drink
fiery molten iron;
others are impaled screaming
upon red-hot iron shafts;

pacyante piṣṭavat ke cid
 ayas|kumbhīṣv avāñ|mukhāḥ;
 dahyante karuṇam̄ ke cid
 dīptes̄v aṅgāra|rāśiṣu;

ke cit tīkṣṇair ayo|damṣṭrair
 bhakṣyante dāruṇaiḥ śvabhiḥ;
 ke cid dhṛṣṭair ayas|tuṇḍair
 vāyasair āyasair iva;

14.15 ke cid dāha|pariśrāntāḥ
 śīta|cchāy”|âbhikāṅksīṇāḥ
 asi|pattra|vanaṁ nīlam̄
 baddhā iva viśanty amī;

pātyante dāruvat ke cit
 kuṭhārair baddha|bāhavaḥ,
 duḥkhe ’pi na vipacyante
 karmabhir dhārit’jāsavah.

sukham̄ syād iti yat karma
 kṛtam̄ duḥkha|nivṛttaye,
 phalam̄ tasy’ ēdam a|vaśair
 duḥkham ev’ ôpabhujyate.

sukh’|ârtham a|śubham̄ kṛtvā
 ya ete bhṛṣa|duḥkhitāḥ,
 āsvādaḥ sa kim eteśām̄
 karoti sukham any api?

some are cooked, heads hanging down,
 like dough in iron cauldrons;
 some are cruelly burnt up
 in blazing piles of coal;

some are devoured by fierce and horrid dogs
 with teeth made of iron;
 some are devoured by insolent Iron-beaks,
 as if by iron crows;

some, exhausted by the burning,
 yearn for cooling shade;
 and like captive men they enter
 the dark forest with leaves of swords;*

some, moreover, with their hands bound,
 are split up with axes like logs;
 even in pain they do not cease,
 their lifebreaths sustained by their deeds;

To bring an end to all their pain
 they did a deed expecting joy;
 Now they experience helplessly
 just this pain, which is its result.

Having done evil deeds to obtain joy,
 these are now suffering immense torments;
 Does that enjoyment bring to them
 even a bit of joy today?

14.15

hasadbhir yat kṛtaṁ karma
 kaluṣam̄ kaluṣ'jātmabhiḥ,
 etat pariṇate kāle
 krośadbhir anubhūyate.

14.20 yady evam̄ pāpa|karmāṇah
 paśyeyuh̄ karmanām̄ phalam,
 vameyur uṣṇam̄ rudhiram̄,
 marmasv abhīhatā iva.

ime 'nye karmabhiś citraiś
 citta|vispanda|saṁbhavaiḥ
 tiryaglyonau vicitrāyām
 upapannās tapasvinah̄.

māṁsa|tvag|vāla|dant'|ârtham̄
 vairād api madād api
 hanyante kṛpaṇam̄ yatra
 bandhūnām̄ paśyatām̄ api.

a|śaknuvanto 'py a|vaśāḥ
 kṣut|tarṣa|śrama|pīḍitāḥ
 go'śva|bhūtāś ca vāhyante
 pratoda|kṣata|mūrtayah̄.

vāhyante gaja|bhūtāś ca
 balīyāṁso 'pi dur|balaiḥ
 aṅkuṣa|kliṣṭa|mūrdhānas
 tāḍitāḥ pāda|pārṣṇibhiḥ.

The vile deeds that vile men
carried out as they laughed,
The same deeds, when the time has come,
those men experience as they weep.

If the evil-doers could only see
the fruits of their deeds in this way,
They would indeed vomit hot blood,
as if struck in a vital part.

14.20

By reason of the diverse deeds they did,
springing from the disturbance of their minds,
These other unfortunate beings are born
in diverse animal wombs.

In those states they are cruelly killed,
even as their kinsmen look on,
For their flesh and skin, fur and tusks,
or from enmity or for thrill.

When they are born as oxen or horses,
they are driven, bodies wounded by goads,
Though they are incapable and helpless,
tormented by hunger, thirst, and fatigue.

And born as elephants they are driven,
although much stronger, by much weaker men,
Heads wounded by ankus hooks,
and beaten by feet and heels.

14.25 satsv apy anyeṣu duḥkheṣu
duḥkham yatra viṣeṣataḥ
paraspara|virodhāc ca
par'|ādhīnatay” āiva ca.

kha|sthāḥ kha|sthair hi bādhyante
jala|sthā jala|cāribhiḥ
sthala|sthāḥ sthala|saṁsthaiś ca
prāpya c’ āiv’ ētar’|ētaraiḥ.

upapannās tathā c’ ēme
mātsary’|ākrānta|cetasah
pitṛ|loke nir|āloke
krpaṇam bhuñjate phalam.

sūci|chidr’|ōpama|mukhāḥ
parvat’|ōpama|kukṣayah
ksut|tarṣaljanitair duḥkhaiḥ
piḍyante duḥkha|bhāginaḥ.

āśayā samatikrāntā
dhāryamāṇāḥ sva|karmabhiḥ
labhante na hy amī bhoktum
praviddhāny a|śucīny api.

14.30 puruṣo yadi jānīta
mātsaryasy’ ēdṛśam phalam
sarvathā Šibi|vad dadyāc
charīr’|āvayavān api.

Though there are other kinds of pain,
here pain comes in a special way,
From hatred toward each other
and subservience to others.

14.25

For those who live in the sky
oppress those living in the sky
Those who live in water too
oppress those living in water
Those who live on land, likewise,
oppress those living on land
As they seize each other.

And when jealousy overwhelms their minds
these are born in the world of the fathers
Deprived of light, and there they experience
their reward in misery.

With mouths as minute as a needle's eye,
with bellies as enormous as mountains,
These unhappy beings are oppressed
with the pains of hunger and thirst.

For, though overcome by hunger,
yet maintained by their former deeds,
They are unable to swallow
even the filth that's thrown away.

If a man perceived that this
was the fruit of jealousy,
Like Shibi, he would always give away
even the parts of his very body.

14.30

ime 'nye naraka|prakhye
garbha|saṃjñe '|śuci|hrade
upapannā manusyeṣu
duḥkham archanti jantavah.

[- - - »]

These other creatures take their birth
in the filthy pool called a womb,
A splitting image of hell,
and endure pain among men.

[. . . ”]



SUMMARY OF CANTOS 14-28

IN THE SANSKRIT text of the *Buddhacarita* the last chapters from the second half of Canto 14 are missing. They are preserved in Chinese and Tibetan translations. I give below a summary of these Cantos based on the English translation of JOHNSTON.

Canto 14: The Awakening (from verse 32)

During the second watch of that night, Siddhártha sees the births and deaths of creatures. He sees before his eyes their births in hell and gives vivid descriptions of the torments endured by people fallen into hell. He sees also their birth in heaven, as also their fall from heaven after the exhaustion of their merits. He describes the sorrow these creatures feel as they are forced to abandon the pleasures of heaven. Having examined all of life, Siddhártha finds nothing that is of substance; everything is as insubstantial and without a core as the heart of a banana tree.

During the third watch, he meditates on the true nature of the world. This leads gradually to the discovery of the causal chain known as Dependent Origination (*pratityasamutpāda*) that leads to old age, sickness, and death. He sees that finally it is ignorance that is the driving force behind this causal chain, and that the absence of ignorance leads to the cessation of the causes that give rise to suffering. In this meditative trance, he also grasps that there is no permanent center, no self, anywhere in the world.

During the fourth watch of the night, as dawn was breaking, Siddhártha becomes Awakened; he becomes a Buddha.

There follows a description of the marvelous happenings that accompanied this event. The Buddha sits under the tree for seven days and reflects on the fact that there is no human being capable of receiving his message. He decides to remain immobile, but remembering his promise he thinks of those who may be capable of accepting his message. He is encouraged in this by the gods, who want him to preach his new doctrine.

The gods of the four quarters offer him four begging bowls, which the Buddha combines to create a single bowl. A group of merchants passing nearby offer him almsfood. Then he thinks of preaching to his two former teachers, Aráda Kaláma and Údraka Rama-putra; but he realizes that both are dead. He then thinks of his five companions and starts out to Varánasi.

Canto 15: Turning the Wheel of Dharma

The Buddha sets out to Varánasi, and on the way he meets another mendicant. He sees the Buddha so calm and shining and asks the Buddha who his teacher is. The Buddha replies: "I have no teacher. I have obtained Nirvana; I am not the same as others. Know that I am the Self-existent (*svayam/bhū*) with respect to dharma" (tr. JOHNSTON). The Buddha says that he has discovered the dharma and is going to Varánasi to beat the drum of the deathless dharma.

He arrives in Varánasi and goes to the deer park where the five mendicants who had deserted him earlier see him approach. Although they had agreed not to pay him any honor, the Buddha's presence, resplendent like the sun, makes them spontaneously greet him with respect. They ask

how the Buddha can achieve the deathless state when he had abandoned the path of ascetic toil. Buddha replies that he has found the middle path between bodily torture that is unprofitable and indulgence in pleasures that leads to ruin.

The Buddha then teaches the law of causality, the eight-fold path to liberation, the doctrine of no-soul, and the four noble truths. After this first sermon, which was the first turning of the wheel of dharma, one of the five mendicants, Kaundinya, obtains insight and grasps the Buddha's doctrine. He becomes the first of the Buddha's disciples. Miraculous events occur at this moment, just as at the birth and the Awakening of the Buddha.

Canto 16: Conversions and Expansion of the Group of Disciples

The four other mendicants then become converted, and the Buddha shines in the midst of his first five disciples like the moon surrounded by five stars.

Then a nobleman named Yashas sees women sleeping in disgusting postures; he leaves his house and comes to the Buddha. Answering the Buddha's call, he understands the dharma and becomes an Arhat while he is still wearing the householder's garb. The Buddha says that the mendicant emblem (*linga*) is not the cause of liberation. Soon that garb miraculously converts into the robe of a mendicant. The Buddha utters the initiatory words "Come, mendicant," and Yashas becomes a Buddhist monk.

At that time there was a total of sixty disciples, all Arhats. The Buddha tells them that they must have compassion and help others to pass beyond suffering. He tells them to go

around the world individually to preach the dharma. He tells them that he himself will go to Gaya to convert the Brahmanical forest hermit Áruvila Káshyapa and his five hundred disciples.

Arriving at Káshyapa's residence, the Buddha asks for a residence in the hermitage. He is given the fire stall with a fierce snake. The mighty snake hisses fiercely at the Buddha, and the fire of his wrath sets the fire stall alight. The fire, however, does not touch the Buddha's body. Seeing the Buddha in the middle of that conflagration, the snake pays homage to him. The Buddha then takes the snake in his begging bowl, shows it to Káshyapa, and performs many miraculous deeds. Áruvila Káshyapa and his five hundred disciples become converts. Then Áruvila's two brothers, Gaya and Nadi, arrive there and are also converted.

On the Gaya·shirsha hill the Buddha delivers a sermon to the Káshyapa brothers and their disciples on fire. The world is consumed by the fire of love and hate; the world is scorched by the fire of sins. Fire is a theme that runs through the Buddha's preaching in this chapter.

Remembering his promise to Shrenya, the king of Mágadha, the Buddha then sets out to Raja·griha. Hearing of his arrival, the king goes on foot to meet him. The Buddha asks Káshyapa to do the preaching here, and Káshyapa's sermon focuses on the giving up of fires, both the ritual fires of the Brahmanical religion and the metaphorical fires of passion. Káshyapa also performs many miracles that astonish the people. When such a great ascetic pays homage to the Buddha, all the people are amazed and begin to have faith in the Buddha. His own sermon dwells on the lack of

permanence in anything, the absence of a soul. He preaches the doctrine of causality encapsulated in the formulation of Dependent Origination. Shrenya is converted and becomes a lay disciple.

Canto 17: Initiation of the Major Disciples

King Shrenya then donates the grove Venu-vana to the Buddha. He lives there in the company of celestial beings headed by Brahma.

Then Ashva-jit, a new disciple of the Buddha, enters Raja-griha and encounters Upatíshya, a Kápila ascetic following the Sankhya doctrine. Upatíshya is impressed by the demeanor and calmness of Ashva-jit and asks whether he knows the final truth and who his teacher is. Ashva-jit answers that his teacher is the omniscient descendent of the Ikshváku line. He does not know the doctrine in its entirety because he is still a novice, but he tells that the Buddha has explained the causes of the elements (dharma), their suppression, and the means to achieving their suppression. Upatíshya is then converted to this new doctrine. When he returns he encounters Maudgalyáyana, who is astonished at Upatíshya's transformation. After the explanation of the new doctrine, Maudgalyáyana is also converted, and the two along with their disciples go to see the Buddha in person.

The Buddha sees them coming and announces that they will be his two chief disciples. The two are described as carrying tripods and wearing matted hair. By the power of the Buddha they are miraculously transformed into monks wearing ochre robes.

Then a householder named Káshyapa leaves his wife and family and becomes an ascetic in search of liberation. He comes to the Buddha and is instructed in the new doctrine. He is also converted and becomes Maha-káshyapa. The Buddha shines in the middle of these three great disciples.

Canto 18: Instruction of Anátha-píndada

From Kósala in the north comes a householder named Su-datta. He approaches the Buddha at night, and the Buddha teaches him the doctrine of impermanence and the lack of a permanent core called a soul. The world is empty, and it was not created by someone, such as a Creator God. He expounds the theory of causality and the impossibility of the world having a personal creator. The Buddha also shows the fallacy of the doctrine that posits Nature as the source of creation; a single nature cannot produce the multiplicity of the universe. The world could not have proceeded from some unmanifest source or from Man (*purusa*). Nor could it have arisen without a cause, by accident or chance.

Su-datta is convinced by the Buddha's arguments and is converted. He offers the Buddha a dwelling he owns in Shravásti. The Buddha praises giving (*dāna*) and presents a long discourse on the merits of giving.

Su-datta goes to Kósala accompanied by Upatíshya and finds the beautiful grove of Jeta, who, however, does not want to part with it. Su-datta covers the land with wealth and offers that as the purchase price; at this sign of generosity, Jeta is converted and gives the entire grove to the Buddhist community. Su-datta, now named Anátha-píndada,

quickly builds a monastery in that grove, now named Jeta-vana.

Canto 19: The Buddha Meets his Father

After vanquishing all the teachers of other doctrines, the Buddha leaves Raja-griha for the city of his father, accompanied by his thousand disciples. The chaplain and minister inform the king about the arrival of his son. The king goes out to meet him, along with the citizens of the capital.

The king is unsure whether to call him "Mendicant" or "Son," and laments that his son has to eat almsfood when he should be ruling the world. The Buddha, knowing his father's mind, performs numerous miracles by flying into the sky and touching the chariot of the sun. He plunges into the earth as if it were water and walks on water as if it were dry land.

The Buddha tells Shuddhódana that he will give what no son has ever given a father. He will explain to him the path to deathlessness. The king is convinced and praises his son for abandoning the kingdom in search of the truth.

Seeing this conversion of the king, many citizens and princes leave their homes to become monks, including Anánda, Nanda, Krímla, Anirúddha, Nanda, Upanánda, and Kuntha-dhana, as well as Deva-datta, who was to become a false teacher and to challenge the Buddha. Udáyin, the chaplain's son, also becomes a monk, as also Upáli, the son of Atri.

After their conversion, the Buddha enters the city of Kápila-vastu. Women begin to eulogize him. They wonder what he will do when he sees his son, Ráhula, whether he will still have a father's affection toward him.

Canto 20: Acceptance of the Jeta-vana Monastery

The Buddha leaves Kápila-vastu and travels to Shravásti, the capital of King Praséna-jit. There he enters the newly constructed monastery at Jeta-vana, and Su-datta presents it to the Buddha. Praséna-jit comes to Jeta-vana to see the Buddha and eulogizes him. The Buddha is pleased and preaches to him the duty to govern the kingdom according to dharma. He then preaches the Buddhist doctrine of impermanence and instructs the king to follow the correct path.

Then leaders of other sects, seeing that the Buddha had converted the king, challenge him to perform magical deeds. He becomes as bright as the sun and vanquishes his opponents. He then converts his mother, who is in heaven, and spends the rainy season in Jeta-vana.

Canto 21: Further Conversions and the Challenge by Deva-datta

Returning from heaven after converting his mother and gods desirous of liberation, he travels around the world preaching and converting numerous people. Among these are King Ajáta-shatru, the mother of Nanda, the brahmin Kuta-datta, and the Sankhya teachers Pañcha-shikha and Ásuri. He also converts various kinds of *yakṣas* and evil beings in various parts of the earth. In Varánasi he converts Katyáyana, the nephew of the sage Ásita. The fame of the Buddha thus spreads wide across the earth.

Deva-datta, however, becomes jealous of the Buddha's fame and instigates a schism within the Buddhist community. Then he rolls down a large rock from the Gridhra-kuta

mountain at the Buddha, but the rock splits in two and does not hurt him. Then he lets loose a huge mad elephant who causes widespread carnage in Raja·griha. But when the elephant approaches the Buddha, he kneels down. Ajáta·shatru, the king of Raja·griha, is amazed at this feat, and all the citizens praise the Buddha. Deva·datta is plunged into hell.

Canto 22: Visit by the Courtesan Amra·pali

The Buddha continues with his missionary activities by visiting various towns and villages, including Pátalí·putra, where the Mágadha king's minister, Varshakára, had constructed a fort to keep the Líchchavis in check. The Buddha predicts the future glory of this city.

Finally, he arrives in the city of Vaisháli and sets up residence in the grove of the courtesan Amra·pali. Seeing her approach, the Buddha warns his disciples about the dangers women pose to men. He gives a long discourse on the ways in which women tempt men and lead them astray. Women using their wiles entrap men. He instructs his disciples to see women as impermanent and not to be attracted to them. It is better to prick one's eyes with a red-hot iron pin than to look at a woman.

Amra·pali pays homage to the Buddha, who speaks highly of her devotion to the dharma. He says that it is difficult especially for a young woman to give up attachment to sensual pleasures and to pursue dharma. Dependence on others and the pangs of child-birth are the lot of women. Feeling disgust for sensual pleasure, then, Amra·pali abhors the activities of her profession and becomes a convert.

Canto 23: Visit by Líchchavis and Sermon on Discipline

After Amra·pali goes home, the leaders of the Líchchavis visit the Buddha. They come dressed in royal splendor. The Buddha tells them that their devotion to dharma is more splendid than all their fine clothes and jewelry. The land of the Vrijjis is fortunate to have leaders who are devoted to dharma. He praises discipline as the highest virtue. He warns against the dangers of passion, which is stronger than a fire, and of anger.

The Líchchavi leaders ask the Buddha to visit them, but he tells them that he must first visit Amra·pali. She gives him almsfood, and he spends the rainy season at her grove. He then returns to Vaisháli, where Mara again accosts him. He tells the Buddha that when he requested the Buddha to enter Nirvana previously, the Buddha had told him that he had to help people to end suffering before he did so. Mara tells him that now many have been converted, so he should enter Nirvana, namely, that he should die. The Buddha tells him to be patient; he will enter Nirvana in three months.

When the Buddha goes into a trance to fix his remaining days, the earth shakes, firebrands fall from the sky, mountains lose their peaks, and there is thunder and lightning everywhere as if the world was coming to an end.

Canto 24: Compassion for the Líchchavis

When Anánda sees the earthquake, his hair stands on end, and he asks the Buddha the reason for it. The Buddha replies that the reason is that he had fixed his life span; he will die in three months. Anánda is deeply troubled and

weeps: the eye of the world is about to close, the lamp that lighted the road is about to be extinguished.

The Buddha comforts him: everything is impermanent, I have taught you the path, the only thing you need is the dharma body I have preached, not my physical body. From now on dharma will be your lamp.

Hearing about the impending death of the Buddha, the Líchchavis come to see him in a hurry. The Buddha preaches the impermanence of all beings, including the gods. All the previous Buddhas have entered Nirvana like lamps whose fuel has been exhausted. He too, likewise, must do the same. Then follows the lament of the Líchchavis.

Canto 25: The Final Journey

The Buddha leaves Vaisháli making that city lose its luster and throwing it into mourning. Out of grief people do not cook or eat; they simply weep. Then follows the lament of Sena·pati Simha at the impending death of the Buddha and an eulogy of him as the rescuer of the world. The Buddha turns around for one last look at Vaisháli and says: "O Vaisháli, I will not see you again!"

The Buddha then reaches a town called Bhoga·nágara. There he tells his followers that after he is gone they must fix their attention on the dharma. Whatever is not found in the Sutras or in the Vínaya is against his principles and should be rejected. He warns them against false views that pretend to be those of the Buddha. All views should be tested against the Sutras and the Vínaya as one tests gold. After these last instructions, the Buddha goes to the town of Papa, where the Mallas honor him.

The Buddha takes his last meal at the house of Chunda. Then he goes to Kushi-nágara and, accompanied by Chunda, crosses the river Irávati and goes to the city park. He then tells Anánda, who was full of grief, to prepare a place for him to lie down between two *sāla* trees; that night he will enter Nirvana. He asks Anánda to tell the Mallas about his impending death. The Buddha gives his final sermon to the Mallas telling them that it is not sufficient merely to look at him; they must practice his dharma. The Mallas then return to Kushi-nágara.

Canto 26: The Maha-parinirvána

Then, an ascetic named Su-bhadra, who was carrying a tripod, the symbol of a Brahmanical ascetic, asks Anánda for permission to see the Buddha. Thinking that he has come to enter into a debate with the Buddha, Anánda tells him that it is not the proper time. But the Buddha sees into the heart of Su-bhadra and tells Anánda to let him in.

The Buddha preaches the Eightfold Path to that brahmin, who understands it and rejects the philosophy of Sankhya that he had followed. He goes into the reasons why the Sankhya tenets cannot bring liberation to anyone. He realizes that the world is caused by desire and that one is liberated by destroying desire. He then becomes awakened and does not want to see the Buddha die. He himself then by his own power enters the final stage, and the Buddha asks his disciples to cremate him; he will be the last disciple of the Buddha.

The Buddha then gives his final instructions to his disciples by telling them that after he is gone they should

consider the Pratimóksha, the code of monastic rules, to be their guide. There follows a long discourse on how the monks should conduct themselves. He asks them whether they have any doubts. Anirúddha proclaims that the wind may lose its movement, the sun may become cold, and the moon may become hot, but the four truths discovered by the Buddha will never be proven to be false. They have no doubts. The Buddha then gives his final words to his disciples, telling them that the time for his entering Nirvana has come. He asks them not to grieve.

The Buddha then enters the trances one by one and finally enters Nirvana. At that time the earth shook; a fire without smoke and not fanned by the wind arose in the four quarters; fearsome thunderbolts fell on the earth; the wind blew violently; the moon's light waned; an eerie darkness fell even though the moon was shining in a cloudless sky; rivers ran with boiling water; *sāla* trees nearby bent down and showered beautiful flowers out of season on the Buddha's body; and various other supernatural phenomena occurred. Mara and his cohorts laughed in joy.

Canto 27: Eulogy of Nirvana

Then heavenly being and seers utter eulogies of the Buddha and discourses on the impermanence of all life. Anirúddha, who had overcome passion, then speaks about the Buddha's final Nirvana. The Sage has gone to peace after conquering all his foes. He speaks of all the great acts of the Buddha. He laments for the world that has lost its leader; it is left like the sun without its light.

Then those disciples who had not yet conquered their passions utter loud laments and weep, but those who had become Arhats reflect that it is the nature of the world to pass away.

Then in due course the Mallas hear the news and come there quickly uttering laments of grief. They place the Buddha's body on a bier of ivory inlaid with gold. They take the bier through the city and across the river Hirányavati to a Chaitya called Kúkuta. There they make a pyre with costly aloe and sandalwood. Although set alight, the wood does not burn, because Káshyapa was on his way with the desire to see the body of the Buddha. When he had paid his obeisance, the pyre lights by itself. Although the fire is able to burn the skin, hair, and flesh, it is unable to burn his bones. Placing the bones in jars, the Mallas joyfully take those relics to the city.

Canto 28: The Division of the Relics

The Mallas worship the relics for some days, and then ambassadors from seven kings come there seeking to obtain some of the relics. The Mallas out of pride and devotion do not want to part with the relics and decide to fight the other kings. The armies of the seven kings then lay siege to the town, and the Mallas mobilize the people for battle.

The wise brahmin Drona makes a speech to the kings asking them to give up the fight and to abide by the dharma of the Buddha. They agree and send Drona as their ambassador to the Mallas. He enters the city and tells the Mallas that the kings are not after wealth or territory. They are as much devoted to the Buddha as they and merely want a

share of his relics. The highest gift is the gift of dharma; this is what the kings are requesting. The Mallas feel ashamed and tell Drona that they will share the relics.

The Mallas then divide the relics into eight parts, keep one part for themselves, and give the other seven to those kings. The kings take the relics and all erect *stūpas* over them; at that time there were eight *stūpas*. The brahmin Drona also takes a jar of relics to his own people, the Písala, and erects a *stūpa* there.

Then five hundred Arhat disciples of the Buddha assemble at Raja·griha to collect the teachings of the Buddha. They agree that it is Anánda who had heard all the sermons and ask him to recite them. Anánda recites them, prefacing each with the words "Thus have I heard" and specifying the time, place, and occasion of each sermon and the person addressed.

In due course Ashóka is born. The Maurya king is faithful to the dharma; from being known as Chandashóka (Ashóka the Fearsome) he came to be known as Ashóka the king of dharma. He takes the relics from seven of the *stūpas* and constructs eighty thousand majestic *stūpas* across the land. He does not get the relics from the eighth at Rama·pura, which is guarded by serpents. Without relinquishing household life, Ashóka thus attains the first fruit of the faith. Likewise, anyone who worships the relics of the Buddha with faith will obtain a similar fruit.

This poem, which is in keeping with the Scriptures, was produced for the good and happiness of all people and not to display skill in poetry or learning.



NOTES

Bold references are to the English text; bold italic references are to the Sanskrit text. An asterisk () in the body of the text marks the word or passage being annotated.*

- 1.10 **Aurva** was the son of Chyávana through his wife Árushi, who was the daughter of Manu. Aurva was born by splitting open the thigh of Árushi: see the *Mahābhārata* (MBh, Critical Edition (CE) 1.60.45. The birth of **Prithu** from the hand of his father Vena is narrated in MBh CE XII.60.105–41. **Mandhátri**, according to the Brahmanical narrative, was born from the side of his father, Yuvanáshva; but according to the Buddhist legend in the *Divyāvadāna* he was born from the head. **Kakshīvat** is known as the son of king Kalínga, but no information is available about his birth through the armpit. Perhaps this legend is related to his name, *kakṣa* meaning the armpit.
- 1.12 For the identification of the Buddha with the sun, see the Introduction, p. xx. The statement in verse 11 that “he gleamed as if he had fallen from heaven” may also refer to this identification. See also the simile in verse 13. The comparison to the “young sun,” that is, the morning sun, evokes the reddish and golden color of his body. His comparison to the **moon**, that is a constant feature of the poem, makes him participate in the best qualities of the two great lights of heaven (see note to 1.16).
- 1.14 The **seven seers** are Maríchi, Ángiras, Atri, Pulástya, Vasíshtha, Púlaha, and Kratu, who are the mind-born sons of Brahma. They are identified with the seven stars of the Ursa Major or the Big Dipper. Here he is compared to these seven great seers of Brahmanical mythology, while his first steps are compared to the seven shining points of light in the firmament.
- 1.16 I take *candra/marici* as a *dvandva* compound, *marici* referring to the rays of the sun. Thus, the simile parallels the hot and cold streams of water that fell on the baby’s head. The simile also could

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refer to the fact that Buddha has connection to both the solar and the lunar royal lineages. JOHNSTON takes the compound as a *tatpurusa* “rays of the moon” and translates: “clear as the rays of the moon.”

- 1.20 JOHNSTON argues against taking *tathāgata* as the common epithet of the Buddha, because Ashva-ghosha, according to him, does not apply the term to him before his Awakening. However, Ashva-ghosha never uses this expression to mean simply “in this fashion.” Further, in verse 19 he says that the serpents had performed the same service to past Buddhas, implicitly calling the present one also a Buddha; even the previous ones were not Buddhas when the serpents performed this service.

Gods of the pure realm (*suddha/ādhivāsa*) are a particular class of deities within Buddhist mythology. They constitute the highest group of gods and are charged with announcing the approaching birth of a Buddha.

- 1.21 The reference may be either to Meru, the great mountain in the middle of the earth around which the sun revolves (see 1.36, 5.43) or to Mandára, the mountain that served as the churning stick (see 6.13; MBh CE 1.16–7).
- 1.26 The sound of the drums here probably refers to thunder. The miraculous nature of this sound is signaled by the statement that it came from a cloudless sky.
- 1.38 Eyes that are not blinking are viewed as a sign of a god. Thus, for example, in the famous epic story, Damayánti recognizes the gods, who had assumed the form of Nala, by the fact that their eyes did not blink: MBh CE III.54.21–4.
- 1.41 The tradition that **Brihas-pati** and **Shukra** (also known as Úshanas) were the founders of the science of politics (*artha/sāstra*) is recorded in the MBh CE XII.59. Brihas-pati is viewed in the epics as the priest of the gods, while Shukra is the priest of the demons. The former was the son of Ángiras, and the latter the son of Bhrigu.

- 1.42 **Sarásvata** was the son of Dadhícha and the river Sarásvati. He was brought up by his mother and learnt the entire Veda from her. The seers who knew the Veda were dispersed during a drought of twelve years. After that they went around the world trying to find the Veda, and one of them encountered Sarásvata reciting the Veda. All the seers then came to Sarásvata and requested him to teach them the Veda (MBh CSL IX. 51 = CE IX. 50). **Vyasa**, the reputed author of the epic *Mahābhārata*, is the one who divided the Veda into its current sections. **Vasishtha** was Vyasa's great-grandfather.
- 1.43 Ashva·ghosha knew **Valmíki**'s authorship of the epic *Rāmāyaṇa*, considered the first verse composition (*padya*); he is viewed as the *ādi/kavi*, the first poet (see JOHNSTON 1984: xlvi–l; HILTEBEITEL 2006: 247–54). His relationship to **Chyávana** is unclear, although Ashva·ghosha appears to make such a connection.
- 1.43 **Atréya**, according to Cháraka, the author of the earliest extant medical text, the *Carakasamhitā* (*Sūtra/sthāna* 1.1–2), was the first to edit the science of medicine from which is derived Cháraka's own version. Atréya was a descendant of **Atri**, one of the seven seers (cf. note to 1.14).
- 1.44 **Kúshika** was an ancient king, who was the father of Gadhin. The latter's son was the celebrated sage Vishva·mitra, who, although born a kshatriya, was able through his austerities to attain the status of a twice-born, that is, a brahmin. Even though the term *dvija* can refer to the three upper classes of society (*varṇa*), its meaning is often narrowed to just brahmins, and this is the meaning with which the term is regularly used by Ashva·ghosha.
- 1.44 **Ságara** was a king born in the lineage of **Ikshváku**. When his sacrificial horse was stolen by demons, his 60,000 sons dug the earth and found the horse grazing near the sage Kápila. When accused of stealing the horse, Kápila burnt them all to ashes. Ságara's great grandson, Bhagi·ratha, brought the heavenly river Ganga down to earth and filled the hole dug by his forefathers, thus creating the ocean, which is called Ságara. Although it is

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unclear what setting boundaries on the ocean means, the reference must be to this episode.

- 1.45 King Jánaka of Vidéha is already celebrated as a wise man in the Upaniṣads. He appears as a teacher of Yoga and Sankhya philosophy in the *Mahābhārata*. The point of the story is that normally brahmins are the teachers; Jánaka inverts this relationship by becoming a teacher of brahmins. Jánaka is connected with several early Sankhya teachers such as Pañcha-shikha and Paráshara. The most famous instance of Jánaka instructing a brahmin is his discourse to Shuka, the son of Vyasa: MBh CE XII.313.
- 1.49 The identity of Ásita is unclear. The most famous sage by that name in Brahmanical mythology is Ásita Dévala. He was a disciple of Vaishampáyana, the reciter of the *Mahābhārata*, and is credited with reciting the epic to the ancestors (MBh CE I.1.64). This identification is supported by the story of the Buddha's birth narrated in the introduction to the Pali *Jātakas* (I.54), where the seer is identified as Kala-Dévala. Although MALALA-SEKERA (1937–38: 1.208–9) insists on distinguishing Ásita from Ásita Dévala who appears in the *Assalāyana Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, there is clearly an overlap between the characters of the two. See DE JONG 1954: 314–5.
- 1.50 The repeated use of *brahman* here is noteworthy. The meaning of the term in this context, however, is not altogether clear, although it probably refers to the Veda.
- 1.52 Anti-deva, also called Ranti-deva, the son of Sánkṛiti, is renowned for his generosity. The episode of his encounter with Vasíshtha is found in MBh CE XII.226.17, where Anti-deva went to heaven by offering lukewarm water to Vasíshtha. Also in the *Mahābhārata*, in a passage relegated to the Appendices in the Critical Edition (XIII App. 14B, 12–13), Anti-deva went to heaven by giving the welcome water (*arghya*) to Vasíshtha.
- 1.57 These words could not have been addressed to Ásita but to King Shuddhódana, although he did not actually hear them. Only Ásita did by the power of his Yoga. Otherwise, the *iti* clause

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- should be construed as simply indirect speech: “I heard a divine voice saying that a son is born to you for Awakening.” But given the reference to Áśita hearing these words in the very next verse, it appears likely that these were the exact words he heard.
- 1.60 The bodily characteristics noted here are part of the list of thirty-two marks of a Great Man who will become either a universal monarch or a Buddha. These are already listed in the *Mahāpādāna Suttanta* of the *Dīghanikāya*; see THOMAS 1949: 220–1. The last mark listed by Ashva·ghoṣa is unclear, because of the ambiguity of the term *vasti*. In the Pali, the expression is *kosobhita/vattha/guhyo*, where *vattha/guhyo* simply refers to “what is enclosed by a cloth,” i.e., the genitals. It is unclear whether the reference in either case is to the penis or the testicles. The reading in the *Lalitavistara* (MITRA 1877: 121) is *kos'ōpagata/vasti/guhyah*. The correspondence to the Pali is noteworthy, and I think *vasti* in Ashva·ghoṣa stands for *vasti/guhya*, probably a wrong back-formation from Pali into Sanskrit (the correct one should be *vastra/guhya*). JOHNSTON takes *vasti* as testicles, and I think he may be right, even though the term *vasti/guhya* has a more general meaning of genitals. The comparison with an elephant is also found in the Pali. An elephant’s testicles are within the abdomen and, therefore, do not hang down. If the expression refers to the penis, then the meaning would be that the penis is enclosed in a sheath of skin; an elephant can extend the penis out of this sheath when urinating. I have used “genitals” to maintain the ambiguity of the original.
- 1.61 The son of Agni, the fire god, is probably Skanda, also known as Subrahmánya. Agni carried the seed that Shiva had deposited on earth, which the earth was unable to bear. Agni then deposited it in Ganga, and she in turn deposited the fetus in the Údaya mountain where the sun rises. When the child was born, the six divine mothers called Kríttika nursed him. The simile here may refer either to these Kríttikas (then the translation would be “on the lap of the goddesses”) or to Ganga, or even to Párvati, the wife of Shiva. For an analysis of Skanda’s birth, see O’FLAHERTY 1981: 93–110.

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- 1.64 Time here refers to the destructive aspect of time, and thus it is an epithet of Death personified. The reference here is to the fact that a son is born to offer food and water to his ancestors. If the child dies prematurely, then it is as if Death has drunk up that ancestral water. See the similar use of “time” in verse 1.68.
- 1.81 There appears to be an abrupt transition here to a discourse by an unidentified person who has not been introduced in Ashva-ghosha’s narrative. He is simply called “that holy (or good) man” (*sa sādhuḥ*). JOHNSTON does not note this problem. COWELL identifies the person as Nara-datta on the basis of the *Lalitavistara* (MITRA 1877: 123). But in that narrative, Nara-datta is the nephew of Ásita and returns with Ásita to his hermitage after visiting the Buddha. Further, Nara-datta has no speaking role in the *Lalitavistara*. If we are to follow Ashva-ghosha, this individual is only identified as the maternal uncle of Shuddhódana.
- 1.83 After the birth of a child, the members of the immediate family are considered impure for ten days. During this period they cannot perform ritual activities.
- 1.84 See the parallel at *Bṛhadāraṇyakopanīṣad* 3.1.1, where King Jánaka gives one thousand cows, to each of whose horns are tied ten pieces of gold.
- 1.89 The wealth-giving god is Kubéra.
- 2.1 The comparison here is between the growing prosperity of the king in terms of money, elephants, horses, and allies, and the four major tributaries of the river Indus. They are probably Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, and Sutlej.
- 2.6 Ancient Indian political science (*arthaśāstra*) envisaged the political geography of a kingdom as consisting of several concentric circles. This is called the *mandala* (circle) theory, where the states contiguous to a particular kingdom are its natural enemies, the states beyond the immediate circles are that kingdom’s natural allies, while some within this expanding circle would be deemed neutrals. His son’s power left Shuddhódana without any

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- enemies; all other kings became his allies or, at worst, remained neutral.
- 2.8 The Sanskrit here is not altogether clear. I take *tā eva* (a problematic expression) as referring to the **medicinal herbs** commonly found in the kingdom. Those same plants now became more potent in curing sicknesses.
- 2.10 The expression **those who have taken the vow** (*vratin*) probably refers to those who are in religious orders of life, such as Vedic students and mendicant ascetics, who are required to beg their food.
- 2.14 We have here a clear reference to the triple set (*tri/varga*), the goals a human being should pursue: pleasure (*kāma*), wealth (*artha*), and religious/moral acts (*dharma*). Here, **dharma** refers specifically to ritual sacrifices that often involved the immolation of an animal. In Shuddhódana's realm, however, people are depicted as pursuing dharma without causing injury to living beings.
- 2.36 This **constellation** is probably Pushya presided over by Brihaspati, who is regarded as the son of Ángiras (hence called Ángirasa). The astronomical text *Brhatsamhitā* of Varáha-mihira (ch. 48) prescribes that the king should take a bath during the full moon falling within Pushya, considered the most powerful of the constellations, so as to assure the prosperity of his family and subjects.
- 2.41 This difficult riddle has been variously explained. The “one” probably refers to the person of the king; “seven” being guarded refer to the seven constituents of a kingdom. They are: king, minister, countryside, fort, treasury, army, and ally (*Arthaśāstra*, 6.1.1). The “seven” to be abandoned are the seven vices of a king. The *Arthaśāstra* (8.3.4, 23, 38) lists three springing from anger: verbal abuse, physical assault, and plunder of property; and four springing from passion: hunting, gambling, women, and drink. The “five” is somewhat unclear, but probably refers to the policies (*upāya*) of the state in its dealing with other kingdoms. Although the *Arthaśāstra* (7.1.2) gives six, we see five listed in MBh

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- CE III.149.42: conciliation, giving gifts, fomenting dissension, war, and staying quiet. For the **triple set** he attained, see note to 2.14. The triple set he understood may refer to three kinds of kings: enemy, ally, and neutral. The first **double set** is probably good policy and bad policy, and the second **double set** is probably anger and lust.
- 2.46 Here we have a play on the name of *Yasho-dhara*, literally, “bearer of fame,” with the statement about her **breasts** (*payo/dhara*, “bearer of milk”) and the fact that she was actually bearing her own fame and not merely the name. Likewise, Rāhula’s face is said to be like the moon, which is the enemy of the demon *Rahu*, whose periodic swallowing of the moon was viewed as causing lunar eclipses.
- 2.49 The comment about not **casting off his white clothes** refers to the common practice of ascetics to wear dirty or ochre-colored clothes. “White” thus became symbolic of the householder’s state. Shuddhódana thus practiced asceticism without giving up home and becoming an ascetic. Sacrifices frequently involved the killing of animals. Here, Shuddhódana is depicted as performing rituals that did not involve animal sacrifice.
- 2.51 The verses of the **Self-existent** (*Svayam/bhū*) cannot be identified; but the Buddha himself is often referred to as Self-existent by Ashva·ghosha. The **difficult deeds** probably refer either to rites and/or to austerities; the creator god is viewed as having performed difficult austerities (*tapas*) in order to bring out the creatures from his own body.
- 2.56 Here the term “**bodhisattva**” (literally, “being destined for Awakening,” it is the term used for the Buddha before he actually became Awakened) is juxtaposed with the term *an/upama/sattva*, “one whose *sattva* is unrivaled or incomparable.” The term *sattva* in the second example may have a wide range of meanings, including intelligence, goodness, and courage. My use of “spirit” is intended to capture this range. See the similar usage at 9.30.
- 2.56 The **cause** here is probably the mental faculties that would yield Awakening in this life, and this cause had **deep roots** because the

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- future Buddha had gone through numerous lifetimes preparing for this event.
- 3.7 **Sniffed his son's head:** it is done here in a manner similar to what an animal does to its young. See OLIVELLE 1998: 589.
- 3.12 For the presence of humpbacks, dwarfs, and **Kairātakas** in the houses of kings and wealthy persons, see the *Arthaśāstra* 1.2.1.1.
- 3.12 The Sanskrit does not make it clear whether the comparison is between the way they bowed and the way flags are carried behind gods in processions, or between the future Buddha and the flags. JOHNSTON opts for the latter and translates “all bowed down as to the flag in the procession of the god.” It is more likely that the future Buddha riding down the road is compared to the god being carried in procession, and the people bowing behind him to the flags being waved behind.
- 3.24 The **flower-bannered god** is Kama, the god of love. In Buddhism he is identified with Mara, the god of death: see below 13.1–2.
- 3.26 **Gods of the pure realm:** see note to 1.20.
- 3.26 The term *prayātum* is probably used with the meaning of *pravrajati*, “to go forth,” which is a technical term to indicate the initial departure of an ascetic from home into a life of homeless wandering. It often refers also to the initiatory rite (*pravrajyā*) an ascetic generally undergoes prior to his assuming the life of an ascetic.
- 3.61–2 The terms *pramādyati* in verse 3.61 and *pramatta* in verse 3.62 have a range of meanings, including being heedless or negligent, being intoxicated, being given to inordinate joy. JOHNSTON and COWELL opt for the first meaning. Although that sense is present, I think the reference is to people continuing to be merry while death is threatening, much like a drunken man (second meaning). Note that the future Buddha was on his way to a pleasure garden.
- 3.62 The term *sa/cetana* is used, I think, with a double entendre: a man who is conscious and self-aware, and a man who is intelligent and wise. See the similar use of the term at 4.59. At 4.60

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we have the opposite *a/cetana*, a man who is unconscious, and a man who is unintelligent; there I use “senseless” to capture the ambiguity. See the comparison to a tree at 4.61, which does not grieve when another tree is cut down. Here too we can see that the tree lacks self-awareness and sensation. My “sensible” attempts to capture this ambiguity.

- 4.5 The term *saumyatva* (“gentleness”) is derived from *soma*, a name for the moon. Further, *dhairyā* (“firmness, fortitude”) can also mean steadiness; and this could be an oblique reference to the moon, which, unlike the stars, does not flicker or twinkle but shines with a steady light. These qualities, then, make the women think that he may be the moon himself.
- 4.8 The term *pranaya* means not just love (so JOHNSTON and COWELL) but in the present context more specifically the displays of love, flirtations, and the like that the courtesans were supposed to be engaged in so as to divert the mind of the future Buddha. See 4.101 where the term clearly means displays of love.
- 4.10 The Kurus were a dynasty of kings of early India to which most of the major kings of ancient India belonged, including those celebrated in the epic *Mahābhārata*. The land of the Kurus, together with that of the Pañchálas, was located in north-central India around the river systems of Yámuna and Ganga. The “Kurus of the north” (*uttarān kurūn*) were those living to the north-west of this region, but this land soon came to be imagined as located in the Himalayas. In this idyllic land, people live for thousands of years and miraculous trees providing sweet fruit grow.
- 4.13 I read *niyuktānām* in *pāda b* rather than *viyuktānām* of the edition. The single Nepali manuscript of the Sanskrit text is written in a version of the Bengali script, and in most north Indian scripts the letters “v” and “n” are similar and can be confused. Further, it is difficult to see how the locative *sva/gocare* could be syntactically connected with *viyuktānām*, which would normally require an ablative or instrumental. Taken this way, the first half-verse neatly contrasts with the second.

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- 4.15 I have restored the reading of the Sanskrit manuscript (*iti*). It makes perfect sense here, and the emendation of JOHNSTON (*itah*) is unnecessary.
- 4.16 Kashi-súndari may be a reference to the shudra maid of Ámbika, the princess of Kashi. Her maid may also have been from Kashi and may have been called Kashi-súndari (“lovely woman from Kashi”). One trait that emerges in the epic discussion of Vyasa, to whom is ascribed in one way or another most of the major Brahmanical scriptural texts, is that his celibacy is often compromised. The specific episode of Kashi-súndari kicking Vyasa, however, is not recorded elsewhere. On this episode, see HILTEBEITEL 2006: 246.
- 4.17 JOHNSTON thinks that this verse is spurious. The names and the episode are not known from other sources.
- 4.18 The story of Gáutama Dirgha-tamas (probably a variant of *Dirgha-tapas*) is found in MBh CE 1.98. He was born blind because he was cursed by Brihas-pati while he was still in the womb. He was sent floating down the Ganges in a raft by his sons who did not want to support him in his old age. He was rescued by a king named Balin, who got him to father sons through his wives. The queen was repelled by him and sent her servant woman to have sex with the sage. It is unclear whether the reference here is to this episode or to another story.
- 4.19 The story of Rishya-shringa, a son of a forest hermit who had never seen a woman is narrated in the *Rámáyana* 1.9. He was ensnared by courtesans, brought to the palace of king Roma-pada, and made to marry Shanta, the king’s daughter.
- 4.20 Vishva-mitra is one of the most famous seers to whom are ascribed some of the most colorful stories of Indian mythology. Ghritáchi is probably the same as Ménaka, who enticed Vishva-mitra while he was engaged in ascetic toil. Their association resulted in the daughter Shakúntala immortalized in Kali-dasa’s play. The *Rámáyana* (rv.34.7) contains a verse which could be the model used by Ashva-ghosha: *Ghrtacyām kila samsakto daśa*

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varsāni, Laksmaṇa, aho ‘manyata dharm’ātmā Viśvāmitro mahā/ munih. “Enamored of Ghritáchi, they say, the great sage Vishva-mitra, who was devoted to dharma, thought ten years to be a single day, Lákshmana.”

- 4.28 The identity of Vivásvat is unclear. The term normally refers to the sun, but he is not usually associated with *apsarases* or with the Vibhrája (or Vaibhrája) park. JOHNSTON thinks that here the term may refer to Indra. At 8.78 he is identified as the father of Manu.
- 4.32 Note the double entendre here. She is asking the prince to make a decorative line (*bhakti*) on her body that is still wet with unguents. But the term *bhakti* can also mean devotion or love; thus she is commanding the prince to be devoted to her.
- 4.36 The identity of Padma·shri is unclear, although the name is applied in Buddhist literature to bodhisattvas, including Avalokitéshvara. It is more likely that the epithet is applied to the goddess of beauty and sovereignty, Shri.
- 4.39 The Sanskrit here is ambiguous and has been subject to different interpretations. JOHNSTON reads *samāpnōtu* and translates “Finish it,” with the meaning “Cap that, if you can” or “Improve on my joke.” I take the word division as *sa mā āpnōtu*. I think this interpretation fits the context better, especially because in the very next verse we see him running. I think the context is the girls and the prince playing tag and trying to catch each other. But the very ambiguity of the expression may have been deliberate, inviting multiple readings. One can read it to say: “Seize (these earrings)!” or “Seize (me)!”
- 4.44 Mango blossoms are yellowish in color. The poet here imagines the mango tree in bloom as a golden cage. See also 4.46.
- 4.45 Ashóka tree (*Jonesia Asoka Roxb.* or *Saraca Indica*) is a tree that occupies a central position in the Indian poetic imagination. The custom of a beautiful young girl touching an *ásoka* tree with

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her foot to bring it into bloom is mentioned in Sanskrit literature (see Raja-shékhara's *Karpūramāñjari*, 2.43). Meaning literally “without sorrow,” it was under an *asoka* tree that Sita, abducted to Lanka by Rávana, lamented her separation from Rama (*Rámáyana* v.12). The fire probably refers either to the orange-red blossoms of the *asoka* and/or to its young leaves that are copper colored (see 4.48).

- 4.46 Mango blossoms are golden in color (see note to 4.44). *Tílaka* (*Clerodendrum phlomoides*) is a medium-sized tree with white flowers. The poet imagines the two gold- and white-flowered trees embracing each other.
- 4.47 **Kúrubaka** is a variety of *Barleria* with bright red flowers (red Amaranth). Its bright red color is compared to the red nails of the women.
- 4.48 Here also (see note to 4.45) the copper color of the young leaves of the *asoka* tree is compared to the red coloring on the hands of the women.
- 4.49 **Sindu-váraka** (*Vitex negundo*) is a small shrub. The comparison is unclear. If we take the lake as the woman, then the *sinduvárakas* on the bank would be the white clothes. The tree is said to have whitish stems, and this may be the point of comparison.
- 4.52 The expression *na tu cintayato '/cintyam* is ambiguous. JOHNSTON translates: “who reflects on what he should not reflect on.” The term *a/cintya*, however, refers probably to what is unthinkable or beyond thought, rather than to something that one should not think about. It suggests that Siddhártha is engaged in a fruitless pursuit.
- 4.54 The Sanskrit is impersonal: *martavyam*. It can mean generally “one must die” or more specifically, “I must die.” In any case, the reference is to the inevitability of death.
- 4.59–60 See my note to 3.61–2 on “sensible” and “senseless.”
- 4.65 JOHNSTON's edition reads *parān/mukhah*, even though the Sanskrit manuscript reads *parān/mukham*. I have adopted the latter

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reading, along with COWELL. It also makes better sense to ascribe this adjective to the prince rather than to Udáyin, who is here censuring the prince for turning his back on the **goals of man** (*puruṣ'ārtha*).

- 4.71 The Sanskrit is quite unclear, and JOHNSTON expresses doubt about his own translation. He suggests taking the first line as: “Just try accepting them with a feeling that does not go beyond courtesy.” But then this verse does not say anything different from the previous one.
- 4.72 The reference is to the famous episode where Indra became infatuated with Ahálya, the wife of the sage Gáutama. Indra takes on the appearance of Gáutama, when the latter is away from home, and has sex with Ahálya.
- 4.73 The creation of **Lopa-mudra** by Agástya and his later marriage to her are narrated in MBh CE III.94–108. The story of Agástya courting Róhini cannot be traced, but at MBh CE III.94.24 Lopa-mudra is compared to the star Róhini.
- 4.74 Brihas-pati’s lust for Mámata, the wife of his older brother Utáthya, is narrated in MBh CE I.88.7–18. In this telling of the story, however, Brihas-pati is unable to father a child because Mámata was already with Utáthya’s child, whom Brihas-pati curses to be blind; the child thus becomes Dirgha-tamas. However, in other tellings it appears that the son of Mámata is identified with Bharad-vaja (see MANI 1975: 116).
- 4.75 Chandra (Moon) was a pupil of Brihas-pati. Tara, one of Brihas-pati’s wives, fell in love with the young Chandra. From their union was born **Budha**, who is identified with the planet Mercury. See MANI 1975: 164, 170.
- 4.76 Kali is also known as Sátavati. Her birth from a fish is narrated in MBh CE I.57. Paráshara’s sexual escapade with Kali is also recorded in MBh CE I.54.2, I.57.69. The son born of this union was the famous Vyasa.
- 4.77 Aksha-mala is also known as Arúndhati. However, some accounts make Arúndhati the wife of Vasíshtha in his first birth,

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- and Aksha-mala (Arúndhati's second birth) his wife in his second birth. There is no information, however, about Aksha-mala being the daughter of an outcaste woman. See MANI 1975: 834–35.
- 4.78 **Yayáti**'s story of recovering youth in his old age is recounted in MBh CE 1.70–80. He indulged in all sorts of pleasures with the help of his new youthfulness. For his dalliance with **Vishváchi**, see MANI 1975: 869.
- 4.79 **Pandu** shot a deer and a doe as they were copulating. The deer turned out to be a sage named Kíndama, who cursed Pandu to die the next time he had sex. In the narrative as told in MBh CE 1.116, Pandu, overcome by lust, had sex with his second wife Madri in spite of the curse and as a result died.
- 4.80 **Karála-jánaka** is said to be from Vidéha. See *Arthaśāstra* 1.6.5. CHARPENTIER (p. 230) notes that the name Jánaka may have been applied to any king of Vidéha, like Brahma-datta of Benares in the *Jātaka* tales. Karála is mentioned in MBh CE XII.291, where little information is given about him. The *Majjhima Nikāya* (II.82) and *Jātaka* (541) identify Karála-jánaka as the son of Nimi, the king of Míthila. Kalára is said to have brought his royal line to an end.
- 4.101 **Displays of love:** for the term *pranaya*, see note to 4.8.
- 5.3 For the problems associated with the simile, see the note on this verse by JOHNSTON. The *drumábja* is also known as *karnikára* (*Pterospermum acerifolium*), whose fragrant yellow flowers are used for dressing the hair. They were put at the top of a flag pole carried into battle. Sleeping girls at 5.51 are compared to *karnikára* branches torn down by an elephant. This may be an allusion to their wearing *karnikára* flowers on their hair.
- 5.10 The meaning of the term *an/āśrava* in this context is unclear. JOHNSTON translates: "which is supramundane in quality." The term, I think, refers to the absence of *āśravas*, the evil inflows which are caused by desire and action and which are tendencies that produce rebirth. See "Handsome Nanda" 16.3, where

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Ashva·ghosha also connects the absence of *āśravas* with stages of meditation.

- 5.12–3 JOHNSTON translates *vijugupsate* as “pay no heed.” I think this is mistaken. The reference, I think, is to people who treat a dead man or an old man with contempt.
- 5.21 JOHNSTON translates *dharma/samjñā* as “awareness of dharma.” I think, however, here *samjñā* has the meaning of a sign or emblem; the mendicant garb is the **emblem of dharma**, that is, a sign that the man wearing it is devoted to renunciation. This expression somehow must be a reference to the god who appeared wearing the mendicant garb; this emblem showed the way to release, as a result of which the Buddha decided to leave home.
- 5.32 On the meaning of *vikrama* in Ashva·ghosha, see OLIVELLE 2007.
- 5.36 The term *a/krama* has the meaning of “in violation of the right order or sequence” (see 5.32, 9.66, 10.23). It can have this meaning here also, but more likely it is used in more general sense of “wayward” or “improper.” See the pun here also, with the Buddha’s reply (5.37) that “if this is impossible (*krama*),” using the term with a different nuance, and the term *niṣkramiṣubh*, “wishing to go out,” again from the same verbal root *√kram*.
- 5.45 The **Lord of Wealth** is Kubéra, and his son is Nala·kúbara (see 1.89).
- 5.49 The simile appears to be as follows: the **river** is the body/chest, the **foam** is the white dress, the **breasts** are the **lotuses**, and the **row of bees** is the flute.
- 5.51 For this simile, see the note to 5.3.
- 5.52 The simile here is clearly taken from sculpture, probably the gateways around a *stūpa* such as those of Sanchi. There women bent to a side and touching a *sāla* tree are depicted at the very edge of the gateway, as if they were almost about to fall down.
- 5.53 The simile appears to be as follows: the **lotus** is the face, the **stalk** is the neck, the **bird** is the earrings. *Kārandava* is probably the

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- common coot, although the term is also applied to any water bird. See DAVE 2005: 298–301.
- 5.57 JOHNSTON's edition reads *babbhub*, which is incorrect. As his note to 5.54 and the edition of COWELL show, the reading should be the negative *na babbhub*.
- 6.1 The identity of **Bhárgava** (descendant of Bhṛigu) here and at 9.2–9.3 is unclear.
- 6.3 The term *anuvartitā* is obscure. JOHNSTON translates it as “politeness.” I take it in its literal sense, “follow;” I think the reference might be to the obedience of a pupil to a teacher, whom he follows from behind literally and metaphorically. The Buddha is now a novice and acts in keeping with his subservient status.
- 6.34 Note the connection in Sanskrit between *Yasho-dhara*, literally “bearer of fame,” and the “**bearer of dharma and fame**” and “highest fame.” See also note to 2.46.
- 6.36 **Sumántra** was the chief minister of Dasha-ratha, the father of Rama (= Rágava, or descendent of Raghu). It was Sumántra who was sent to the forest to bring back Rama; he too returned empty-handed. The journey of the minister to the Buddha is clearly crafted in imitation of the Rama story.
- 6.37 The meaning of the expression *ucita/darśitvāt* is somewhat unclear. JOHNSTON translates: “since I am in the habit of seeing what is proper;” and COWELL: “by way of telling them good news.” Given the context of Chanda telling the Buddha what he will be obliged to do after returning to the palace, the expression must refer to the reason why he must talk to the women of the seraglio. Normally they would be out of bounds to men; but, as the groom, he is in the habit of interacting with them. I take *ucita* as “accustomed.”
- 6.49 The first half-verse is difficult. Is the separation from the leaves or from the color of the leaves? The Sanskrit, if read literally, appears to favor the latter. Accordingly, JOHNSTON translates: “Trees are parted from the colouring of their leaves, though it is connate with them.” So also COWELL. I prefer to see the simile in

the falling of leaves as they discolor and turn brown, although I have been forced to take *sahajena* as implying *parñena*, and the compound *parña/rāgena* as giving the reason and the timing for the separation of the leaves from the tree.

- 6.62 The contrast between the clothes of an ascetic, which are ochre, and the white clothes of householders is a constant theme in ascetic literature. For an ascetic, donning white clothes is tantamount to giving up the ascetic life and returning home. The Buddha is constantly equated to the sun and the moon by Ashva-ghosha. See also note to 2.49.
- 6.65 **The king of stars** is the moon. **Wrapped in twilight clouds**, the moon would look orange in color, thus resembling the Buddha wrapped in his ochre robe.
- 6.68 JOHNSTON's edition reads *avasa*, and he does not note this in his list of corrections. But I take it to be a typo; both COWELL and SCHOTSMAN read *avaśāh*.
- 7.1 **Siddha** refers to a particular class of deities. Given the meaning of the term ("perfected one"), it also refers to the supernatural attainments of these beings. Here, Ashva-ghosha clearly makes a connection between such a deity and the very name of the Buddha, Sarvártha-siddha.
- 7.3 The purpose of the **yoke poles** is unclear. But other more specific terms of the ascetic vocabulary, such as *khāri/kāja*, *khāri/bhāra*, and *khāri/vidha*, refer to a pole to whose end was attached a bundle containing the ascetic's belongings.
- 7.5 It is a general belief expressed in poetry that peacocks burst into joyous song at the coming of the rains. Ascetics following the **deer-vow**, that is, imitating the life style of deer by grazing like them, are recorded later by Ashva-ghosha himself at 7.15.
- 7.7 **Vasus** are a group of eight gods variously identified in different sources. The **Ashvins** are twin gods renowned for their beauty. They are the physicians of the gods.
- 7.8 **King of gods** is Indra.

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- 7.15 It is a common theme in the epic literature that an ascetic who sits immobile in meditation for long periods of time could become an anthill; termites would build their mound around him. The *Mahābhārata* (CE III.122) describes how the sage Chyāvana turned into an anthill in that manner. Seeing his eyes beneath the earth, Sukānya did not know what to make of it and pricked the eyes with a thorn.
- 7.28 If merit comes from the purity of one's food, then the deer should acquire a lot of merit, because they eat only grass, leaves, and berries, which are all pure food. And if simple poverty or lack of wealth is meritorious, then even outcastes and other people normally excluded from religion should acquire merit because they are poor from birth or due to some misfortune.
- 7.30 Bathing at a **sacred ford** (*tīrtha*) is considered purifying. And **water** used for various kinds of sipping and ablution is also considered similarly purifying. One may also see the use of *tīrtha* as a reference to the parts of the hand also called *tīrtha* used to sip water at various rituals.
- 7.34 The third line of the Sanskrit text is corrupt and difficult to restore. The translation is tentative. See JOHNSTON's note regarding the alternative readings.
- 7.41 This appears to anticipate Siddhártha's journey later to the Vindhya mountains in the south to visit the sage Aráda Kaláma.
- 7.46 Following JOHNSTON's suggestion, I emend the reading *samprati* (now, at the present time) to *tam prati* (with regard to it) in my translation.
- 7.49 The expression *pūrva/yuga* probably refers to the first and golden age in which men were perfect. JOHNSTON takes it as referring more generally to previous times and translates "the primeval ages."
- 7.54 **Vindhya-koshtha** literally means a cave or similar enclosure in the Vindhya mountain range. It is unclear whether the term has a more specific meaning, referring to a particular place. JOHNSTON poses the question whether the Sankhya system of philosophy

was associated with the Vindhya regions; there is also a Sankhya teacher with the name Vindhya-vasin, “resident of Vindhya.”

- 7.55 The compound *tattva/mārga* may simply mean “path of truth.” But given the Sankhya context, I agree with JOHNSTON that *tattva* here refers to the twenty-five cosmological principles of that system enumerated somewhat unclearly at 12.18–20. It is, of course, unclear what kind of Sankhya was known to Ashvaghosha; most likely, it was an early form and not the later classical system of the *Sāṃkhyakārikā*.
- 8.8 Dásharatha is the son of Dasha-ratha, namely, Rama. After Rama went into exile in the forest, his chariot returned to the capital empty: *Rāmāyaṇa* II.51. As I have pointed out in the Introduction, it appears that Ashvaghosha’s narrative of the departure of the Buddha, the return of Chanda, and the lamentations in the city and the palace, is modeled after that of Rama in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, although cast within a Buddhist theological and moral background.
- 8.11 The expression *phal’/ottham* is not altogether clear. If the meaning is that the mind rises from *phala*, as I have taken it, the *phala* must refer to the fruits of former actions that determine the state of one’s mind in this life.
- 8.13 The myth of Indra killing Vritra is an old one, already recorded in the *Rgveda*. Later elaborations of the myth considered Vritra to be a brahmin; his killing resulted in Indra becoming guilty of one of the most serious of sins, the killing of a brahmin. The *Mahābhārata* (CSL V.10.45–46 = CE V.10.43–44) says that Indra ran to the end of the world to hide and dwelt there concealed in the waters.
- 8.20 Autumn clouds, coming after the rainy season, are white. The comparison appears to be to the white palace, the rushing women being compared to the unexpected lightning in a white cloud.
- 8.36 The comparison probably has many facets. Siddhártha remains steadfast and real like the earth or the Himalayas, but yet unconcerned and withdrawn. He exists, but is of no use. Alternatively,

the compound *himavan/mabi/same* can also refer to the uplands of the Himalayas where Chanda left him.

- 8.48 For these episodes see 6.57–6.63 above.
- 8.77 For this episode, where *Suvárna-nishthívin* is killed by a lightning bolt disguised as a tiger released by the demons Bala and Vritra, see MBh CE XII.31.
- 8.79 The son of Aja is Dasha-ratha, the father of Rama. He dies soon after Rama went into exile. See the note to 8.8.
- 8.80 The expression *jal'/âñjalib* (handful of water) is a reference to the son who will offer libations to the father when he is dead. See note to 1.64.
- 8.81 For the lament of Dasha-ratha when Rama went into exile, see *Rāmāyana* II.34.
- 9.2 For the identity of **Bhárgava**, see the note to 6.1.
- 9.9 **Vama-deva** was the minister of Dasha-ratha, the father of Rama. The identity of **Aurvashéya** (the son or descendant of Úrvashi) is unclear. JOHNSTON has argued that he is Vasíshtha, the chaplain (*purohita*) of Dasha-ratha; there is early Vedic evidence for Vasíshtha being the son of Úrvashi and Váruna (see *Rgveda* 7.33.11), even though this was not part of the Vasíshtha story in the epics.
- 9.10 Ángirasa here is probably Brihas-pati, the teacher of the gods; he is probably viewed here as the chaplain of the king of gods, Indra, paralleling the chaplain of Shuddhódana of the story. If the parallel holds, then Shukra should be the counselor of Indra. Shukra is often depicted as the preceptor of the *asuras*.
- 9.11 Here the Buddha is compared to the moon. The twin asterism (*nakṣatra*) Punar-Vasu is the seventh in the Indian list. They are the α and β Geminorum.
- 9.12 Jayánta is the son of Indra. I have not been able to identify a story such as the one hinted at here. The simile could simply be based on the assumption that Brihas-pati, Indra's chaplain, would have given fatherly advice to Indra's son.

- 9.16 The parallel is that the wind grates, i.e., disperses, clouds, sun dries up water, fire burns hay, and a thunderbolt shatters a mountain.
- 9.18 The emblem (*linga*) of an ascetic consists of such things as shaven head, ochre dress, begging bowl, and walking stick. That these are not what brings about liberation is repeatedly stated even in Brahmanical texts (MBh CE XII.308.47–8), with the oft-repeated adage: *na lingam dharma/kāraṇam*, “the emblem does not produce dharma.”
- 9.21 There are two difficulties with the Sanskrit text of this verse. First is *ubhau pi*, which is impossible sandhi. COWELL’s manuscripts had *ubhe’pi*, which may be the result of copyists trying to correct the original. Could the *pi* be the result of a Prakritic influence? Note that *api* is regularly rendered *pi* in Pali. The second difficulty affects the meaning. The Nepali manuscript, the only extant one in Sanskrit, reads *vitt’ādhipatyam*, but, as JOHNSTON notes, such a meaning (“dominion over wealth”) is impossible in the context. The appeal is to the possibility that the Buddha can both rule the kingdom and follow dharma. JOHNSTON takes *vitta* to mean knowledge simply on the basis of its connection to *vivid* “to know.” I have opted to go with COWELL’s reading found in the copies of the Nepali manuscript he had access to, namely, *citt’ādhipatyam*. In northern Indian scripts, the orthography of *ci* and *vi* is very similar. Another possibility is *vṛtt’ādhipatyam*. The *Mahābhārata* passage cited by JOHNSTON (*dharmaṁ anye vittam anye dhanam ibanti c’ āpare*) as given in the Pune Critical Edition (XII, App. 1.4, line 34) actually reads *vṛttam anye*. With that reading the translation would be “dominion over proper conduct.” The reading, however, remains doubtful.
- 9.25 Bhishma was the son of Shántanu. Shántanu fell in love with Satya-vati, a fisherman’s daughter, who extracted the promise that Satya-vati’s son would succeed to the throne. To help his father, Bhishma voluntarily gave up his right to the kingdom. Rama also voluntarily went into exile in the forest so his father could redeem his pledge and make his younger son the heir to the

throne. Rama, the son of Bhrigu, commonly known as Páraśhu-rama, killed the entire race of kshatriyas to avenge the death of his father.

- 9.26 Agástya's departure to the southern regions of India is a well-known myth. He is regarded as still dwelling in the south, and thus the south, the region of death, is identified as Agástya's region. Not going to Agástya's region means that she had not died yet.
- 9.28 For the myth of Rahu and its connection to Ráhula, the Buddha's son, see note to 2.46.
- 9.30 For the play on the words *bodhisattva* and *paripūrṇa/sattvah*, see note to 2.56.
- 9.35 The word "here" (*iha*) may well refer to the side of the road where the Buddha and the two envoys were talking. Travelers would usually have gathered to rest under a tree, just like the Buddha, before each went his own way.
- 9.36 The trickery here may consist in the relatives thinking that their link to him is permanent.
- 9.63 Ishvara means simply "Lord," but it can have a more specific meaning with reference to Shiva. It is unclear whether in the present context the term refers to Shiva or more generally to the creator god.
- 9.65 The use of *mokṣa* here may be similar to its usage in Manu (see OLIVELLE 2004: note to 1.114), where it means simply renunciation. Thus Manu says at 6.35–7 that a man may set his sights on *mokṣa*, i.e., renunciation, only after he has paid his three debts.
- 9.66 For the use of the term *vikrama* with the meaning of "violating an established sequence or order," see OLIVELLE 2007.
- 9.69 Ambarísha was the son of Mandhátri. Even though we have stories about many of his exploits, there is none that accords with the one hinted at by Ashva-ghosha. The reference in the second story of this verse is probably not to Rama but to Páraśhu-rama, who rid the world of Árjuna Kartavírya (MANI 1975: 570).

JOHNSTON, I think, is mistaken in translating “surrounded by his subjects;” the verb *वृत्* here is to choose or request rather than to cover or surround.

- 9.70 JOHNSTON identifies this **king of Shalvas** with Dyumatséna, who lost his kingdom and went to the forest. But he regained his kingdom through the marriage of his son Sátyavan to Sávitri, the daughter of King Ashva-pati. The persistence of Sávitri saved her husband from death and won back the kingdom for her father-in-law (MBh CSL III.293–299 = CE III.277–283). For **Anti-deva**’s connection to Vasishtha, see the note to 1.52. The story of his accepting sovereignty from Vasishtha, however, is not recorded elsewhere.
- 10.2 The reference is to the city of Raja-griha that has five hills surrounding it, as well as hot springs. The reference of **Svayambhu** (the Self-existent One) is unclear (see 2.51). It may refer to the self-existent creator Brahma (see Manu 1.1–7). The Buddha himself is called by that name, but given the simile the reference must be to some other divine person.
- 10.3 Shiva is the god who has the bull on the banner; he is known by the epithet Sthanu, which can mean a **pillar** or anything or anyone that is immobile. According to the myth as narrated in MBh CE x.17, Brahma asks Shiva to create living beings. But Shiva plunged into water and performed ascetic toil for a long time. His remaining still in this manner appears to have been the reason for his getting the epithet Sthanu. For a detailed discussion, see SHULMAN 1986 and KRAMRISCH 1981: 117–22.
- 10.17 The **Pándava** mountain is the north-easterly of the five hills around Raja-griha, and the name is a clear reference to the *Mahābhārata* episode where Krishna, Árjuna, and Bhima approach the city across these hills to kill its king, Jara-sandha. For a more complete study of this, see HILTEBEITEL 2006: 257–9. The “**bouncing mane**” may be a comparison to the head-dress of the king that would have a long white cloth streaming behind (see 6.57).

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- 10.19 The expression *dharmaśya nirmāṇam* is not altogether clear. JOHNSTON translates it as “some being magically projected by Dharma.” I follow EDGERTON (1953: 302) in taking *nirmāṇa* more metaphorically as a “projection” and therefore a picture or image of dharma. For Svayam-bhu, see note to 10.2.
- 10.20 According to Manu 2.127, the polite way to greet a kshatriya is to ask about his health (*an/āmaya*). Ashva-ghosha is following this custom in his composition.
- 10.22 The friendship (*priti*) alluded to here probably refers to a hereditary alliance that the two royal houses had forged.
- 10.23 On the meaning of *krama* and its opposite *vikrama*, see note to 9.66.
- 10.39 The last half of the verse is problematic with the repetition of *nāka/prsthām*. If both mean the same thing, then it is tautological. The Chinese translation appears to read the first one as *nāga/prsthām* (the back of the serpent), and if this was correct then we could take *adbiṣṭhāya hi nāga/prsthām* as “mounting the back of the serpent,” i.e., killing the serpent. Then the translation would be: “For having killed the serpent, even Marūtvat attained the crest of heaven by means of sacrifices.”
- 11.2 For the difficulties in the reading of this verse, see JOHNSTON’s note to it. **Haryánka** (or Haryáṅga) is a Brihad-ratha king, said to have been the founder of the dynasty of Raja-griha.
- 11.14 For the sin incurred by Indra when he killed Vritra, see note to 8.13. It is unclear which story of Náhusha the verse alludes to. Náhusha, however, was elected to replace Indra when he hid himself after killing Vritra; but he was not satisfied with this and craved for Indra’s wife. As a result he was cursed to become a snake on earth, regaining his original form only after seeing the Pándavas.
- 11.15 For Aida, see the note to 13.12. His downfall came when he stole the property of some brahmins.
- 11.16 On the divine kingship going from Indra to Náhusha, see note to 11.14. **Bali** was the leader of the *asuras*, the enemies of the

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gods. He was anointed as Indra, the king of gods, by Shukra (see note to 1.41). It was after his defeat by Vishnu that Indra was able to resume the role of king (MANI 1975: 103). Note that in this verse Ashva-ghosha cleverly uses the two meanings of *viṣaya*, object of sense and realm/kingdom.

11.18 The killing of Ugráyudha by Bhishma is mentioned in MBh CE XII.27.10. The story is laid out in greater detail in the *Harivamśa* 15.30ff.

11.31–32 The destruction of the Kurus was the result of the *Mahābhārata* war in which the Pándavas were victorious. The Vrishni-Ándhakas are mentioned frequently in the epic as an allied group. Not much is known about the Mékhala (or Mékala) or the Dándakas. As JOHNSTON observes, it may well be that these groups of peoples are associated with the four vices arising from lust: dice, drink, hunting, and women. The Kurus are associated with dice, the Vrishni-Ándhakas probably with drink, and the Mékhala-Dándakas with hunting. The two demon brothers, Sunda and Upasúnda, are then associated with lust for women. The story is that both fell in love with the same woman, Tilóttama; in the ensuing fight both were killed. On the early kings coming to ruin because of their lack of discipline, see also Manu 7.40–2.

11.70 For details of this enigmatic verse and the many meanings of the verb *ava*, see JOHNSTON's note to it.

11.71 The enemy of cold is both fire and the sun. Fire is called “twice-born” in the Vedas, probably because of his birth in heaven as the sun and on earth as fire. Water comes from clouds that are formed by smoke produced by fire; and when water encounters its cause, fire, it makes the fire leave its visible form and return to its latent form. Likewise, the king should kill the darkness that is the enemy of the sun, which, like fire, is also the enemy of the cold. Then, like the fire, the mind goes back into a latent state.

12.17–20 We are dealing here with a very ancient form of Sankhya philosophy. Primal nature (*Prakrti*) is the material principle of all

material entities, and Transformation (*Vikāra*) is the evolutionary process whereby material entities are evolved from Primal nature. In early Sankhya *prakṛti* is viewed as consisting of eight (see verse 18) and *vikāra* as consisting of sixteen (see verse 19), thus constituting the twenty-four material principles of the cosmos. “Being” here probably means the totality of material reality as opposed to the Spiritual being called “**Knower of the field**,” field being the “knowable” reality, which is material.

- 12.21 **Kápila** is considered the founder of the Sankhya system. Here he and his pupils are identified with the spiritual principle of the cosmos, whereas **Praja-pati**, the old creator god, is viewed as the personification of the material universe. I take the Sanskrit *iha* to mean “in this system or doctrine” rather than “in this world” (JOHNSTON).
- 12.30 The term ***namah***, indicating veneration, occurs in many invocations of gods (e.g., *Ganeśaya namah*). The ritual exclamation *vāsat* accompanies many fire offerings in Vedic rituals.
- 12.33 JOHNSTON identifies the “**wise one**” as the great Sankhya teacher Várshaganya. See also JOHNSTON (1930: 861–2).
- 12.58 JOHNSTON takes **Great** (*brhat*) to be *brahman* or the Absolute. The term *brhat*, however, could have other meanings especially within the Sankhya cosmology of Aráda, particularly with reference to Primal nature or *prakṛti*. Ashva-ghosha is also playing with this term in its multiple meanings when he uses it three times in this verse.
- 12.67 **Jaigishávyá** is cited as an early Sankhya teacher in MBh CE XII.222. For **Jánaka**, see note to 1.45. **Elder Paráshara** is probably the same as the famous Sankhya teacher Pañcha-shikha.
- 12.70 In the Sankhya system the eight *prakṛtis* (see note to 12.17–20) act as a **seed**, giving birth to other entities within the evolutionary process. When such qualities are present, someone cannot be said to be fully liberated. The term ***dharma*** here has the meaning of **quality** or characteristic.

N O T E S

- 12.77 As BRONKHORST (2005) has shown, **number** here refers not to Sankhya, as had previously been thought, but to a category in the Vaishéshika system of philosophy. “Number” (*samkhyā*) appears in a list of fourteen qualities in a soul. According to Vaishéshika, the first nine disappear in a liberated soul, whereas some of the remaining five headed by “number” remain. The Buddha says that when such qualities are present, a person cannot be viewed as liberated. BRONKHORST has shown that the entire argument of the following verses is also directed at doctrines of Vaishéshika rather than Sankhya.
- 12.85 These states of consciousness reached during meditative trance are expressed in Buddhist terminology.
- 12.101 The reference is to the Buddha’s previous meditative trance described at 5.8–15.
- 13.5 The identity of this king of Vidéha is uncertain, but he could be Karála-Jánaka alluded to in 4.80 (see the note to it).
- 13.11 An **enemy of fish** is mentioned twice by Ashva-ghosha in “Handsome Nanda” (8.44, 10.53). There it is said that he fell in love with a woman named Kumúdvati. He is known elsewhere as an enemy of Kama, the god of love. At 10.53 of “Handsome Nanda” we hear that this person was reduced to ashes by passion.
- 13.12 **Aida**, the son of Ida, is the same as Purúravas. His father was Budha, the son of Moon. Purúravas was cursed by Kama, the god of love, to go mad when separated from his wife Úrvashi. King Shántanu’s infatuation with Ganga and his shaking uncontrollably when separated from her is recorded in “Handsome Nanda” 7.41. For the story of Shántanu, see MBh CE 1.91–3.
- 13.16 The story of Kama preparing to strike Shiva (= **Shambhu**) with his arrow is well known in Indian mythology. In the commonly told version, Shiva notices Kama and reduces him to ashes before he can discharge his arrow. Apparently, Ashva-ghosha knew a different version of the story. In any case, Shiva did fall in love with Párvati, which was the intent of Kama.

NOTES

- 13.38 It is unclear whether this is a reference to a mythological episode or simply a description of what happens to mountain outcrops when struck by lightning. If it is the former, it may refer to a time when mountains had wings. Indra struck them in order to clip their wings and to make them immobile. See MANI 1975: 325.
- 14.5 Along with JOHNSTON, I think the reading *ca kriyāḥ* is erroneous. The original probably was *cakriyah*.
- 14.15 Forest with leaves of swords (*asi/pattra/vanam*) is the name of one of the hells in Brahmanical mythology: see MANI 1975: 58. It is unclear whether Ashva-ghosha is here alluding to this particular hell or simply describing a particular place these people go to.



LIST OF METERS

The following meters are used in this text:

anuṣṭubh 4.1-96, 6.1-55, 12.1-115, 14.1-31

aparavaktra 7.58

aupacchandasika 5.1-78

mālinī 2.56, 13.72

praharsiṇī 9.81, 9.82, 10.41

puspitāgrā 1.80-89, 5.79-87, 8.81-87

rucirā 3.64, 3.65, 12.121

sikharinī 4.103

upajāti 1.8-24, 1.40-79, 2.1-55, 3.1-62, 6.56-65, 7.1-57, 9.1-71,
10.1-39, 11.1-57, 13.1-69

vamśastha 3.63, 4.97-102, 6.66-68, 8.1-80, 9.72-80, 10.40, 11.58-
73, 12.116-120, 13.70, 13.71

unidentified due to lacunae 1.1-7, 1.25-39



GLOSSARY OF NAMES

- ADÍTYA son or descendent of Áditi, especially applied to the sun.
- AGÁSTYA a sage already mentioned in the *Rgveda* in connection with Lopa-mudra. He is said to have gone to the south, and thus is connected with the southern region (9.26): see note to 4.73.
- AGNI the fire god.
- AHÁLYA the wife of the seer Gáutama: see note to 4.72.
- AIDA the son of Budha and Ida who conquered the whole world. He is also known as Purúravas, whose wife was Úrvashi: see note to 13.12.
- AJA the father of Dasha-ratha, who was the father of Rama.
- AKANÍSHTHA name of the fifth and highest class of Shuddhavása deities in Buddhist mythology.
- AKSHA-MALA the wife of Vasíshtha: see note to 4.77.
- ÁLAKA the capital city of Kubéra located in the Himalayas.
- AMBARÍSHA the son of Mandhátri: see note to 9.69.
- ANARÁNYA little is known about this king from Brahmanical sources. He is mentioned in the list of kings in MBh CE 1.171–9. Clearly, Ashva-ghosha had access to a narrative in which he ruled over a very prosperous and peaceful kingdom.
- ÁNGIRAS an ancient seer born from the mind of the creator god Brahma. One of the seven seers: see note to 1.14.
- ÁNGIRASA son or descendant of Ángiras, often identified with Brihas-pati: see 2.36, 9.10.
- ANTI-DEVA also called Ranti-deva, he is the son of Sánkriti and is well known for his generosity: see note to 1.52.
- ÁPSARAS a class of female divine beings associated with water. They are extremely beautiful and are experts in dance. They are often coupled with *gandharvas*.
- ARÁDA the name of a philosopher-ascetic to whom the future Buddha went for instruction. He left Aráda, dissatisfied with his teaching.

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ASHÁDHA A king named Ashádha is mentioned in MBh CE 1.61.58, but nothing else is known about him. The passage at 9.20 indicates that he aspired to liberation while remaining a householder.

ÁSITA a Brahmanical seer, often called Ásita Dévala: see note to 1.49.

ASHÓKA the name of the tree *Jonesia Asoka Roxb.* or *Saraca Indica*: see note to 4.45.

ASHVIN a twin divinity identified with medical knowledge.

ATRÉYA regarded as the first person to create a text on medicine: see note to 1.43.

ATRI an ancient seer, the father of Atréya associated with medical texts.

AURVA the son of Chyávana. He was born by splitting the thigh of his mother: see note to 1.10.

AURVASHÉYA perhaps the same as Vasíshtha. For the identity of this figure see note to 9.9.

BALI at 11.16 he is identified as the king of the gods from whom sovereignty passed to Indra, and at 9.20 he is said to be a king who aspired to liberation while still a householder. In other accounts he is identified as a king of the *asura* demons.

BHARAD·VAJA the son of Brihas·pati: see note to 4.74.

BHÁRGAVA the identity of this sage is unclear: see 6.1, 9.2.

BHAVA another name for Shiva.

BHISHMA the eldest son of Shántanu and a main figure in the *Mahābhārata*; see note to 9.25.

BHRIGU an ancient seer who was the progenitor of the Bhárgavas: see note to 1.41.

BRIHAT·PHALA a class of Buddhist deities dwelling within the realm of form (*rūp/āvacara*).

BRIHAS·PATI the son of Ángiras and the teacher of the gods, he is viewed as the author of a text on political science: see note to 1.41.

BUDHA identified with Mercury, he is the son of the Moon by the wife of Brihas·pati: see note to 4.75.

GLOSSARY OF NAMES

- CHÁITRARATHA a lovely forest known for its beauty in which many episodes in the *Mahābhārata* took place: see MANI (1975: 166).
- CHAKRA·VAKA the ruddy sheldrake or the "Brahmini Duck," the name being derived from its call that resembles the sound of a wheel. The attachment of a pair and their faithfulness is celebrated in Sanskrit poetry: see DAVE (2005: 450–51).
- CHÁNDĀ(KA) the groom who accompanied Prince Siddhártha, the future Buddha, during his great departure with the horse Kánthaka.
- CHYÁVANA an ancient seer, the son of Bhṛigu, famous for recovering his youth when he was very old: see note to 1.43.
- DARBHA a type of grass used for ritual purposes, most commonly the same as *kuśa*; specifically the grass *Saccharum cylindricum*. Sometimes, *darbha* can mean simply a tuft or bundle.
- DASHA·RATHA the father of Rama.
- DÁSHARATHA the patronymic of Rama, the son of Dasha·ratha.
- DHRUVA his identity is unclear. JOHNSTON identifies him with the god Brahma. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (1.12) has an account of one Dhruva who through austerities became a great king and attained the highest heaven.
- DRUMA he is identified as the king of the Shalvas who returned to his city and resumed his kingship. He is probably the same as Dyumat-sena, the father of Sátyavan and the father-in-law of Sávitri.
- DRUMÁBJA: also known as *karnikāra*, it is the flower of the plant *Pterospermum acerifolium*: see note to 5.3.
- GADHIN the father of the celebrated sage Vishva·mitra: see note to 1.44.
- GANDHÁRVA a class of male divine beings associated with the female *apsarases*. *Gandharvas* are experts in music.
- GÁRUDA the name of the mythical bird and the vehicle of Vishnu. He is considered the divine king of birds.
- GÁUTAMA a famous sage whose wife, Ahálya, was raped by Indra: see note to 4.72.
- GÁUTAMA DIRGHA·TAPAS a sage who was born blind due to a curse: see note to 4.18.

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- GÁUTAMI** the name of Prince Siddhártha's foster mother, who was the sister of his biological mother, Maya.
- GAYA** a royal seer by this name is recorded in MBh CE III.93, where he is said to be son of Amúrta·rayas.
- GIRI·VRAJA** another name for Raja·griha.
- GHRITÁCHI** the name of an *apsaras*, probably the same as Ménaka: see note to 4.20.
- HARYÁNKA** Haryánka (or Haryánga) is a Brihad·ratha king, said to have been the founder of the dynasty of Raja·griha.
- IKSHVÁKU** the son of Manu and the one who established the solar dynasty of kings.
- INDRA** the king of the gods, also called Shakra especially in Buddhist literature.
- ÍSHVARA** literally "lord," the name given to the creator god or specifically to Shiva.
- JAIGISHÁVYA** see note to 12.67.
- JÁNAKA** the famous king of Vidéha. He appears in the *Upaniṣads* as a wise king and the *Mahābhārata* makes him a teacher of yoga and of the path to liberation: see note to 1.45.
- JANGHA** See note to 4.17.
- JAYÁNTA** the son of the god Indra.
- KA** another name for the creator god Praja·pati or Brahma.
- KAILÁSA** located in the Himalayas, it is the mountain residence of Shiva.
- KAIRÁTAKA** this term probably refers to a group of tribal or lower-class people known as Kirátas. Buddhist texts show that humpbacks, dwarfs, and Kirátas regularly lived in establishments of courtesans.
- KAKSHÍVAT** a king who was born from the armpit: see note to 1.10.
- KALAVÍNKA** a generic name for a variety of sparrow-like birds, perhaps including finches: see DAVE 2005: 487.
- KALI** another name for Sátyavati, the mother of Vyasa: see note to 4.76.
- KAMA** the god of love.

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KÁNTHAKA the horse that carried Prince Siddhártha, the future Buddha, to the forest.

KÁPILA (1) name of the capital of the Shakya kingdom, Kápila-vastu; (2) name of a famous sage and philosopher viewed as the founder of the Sankhya system of philosophy.

KÁPILA-VASTU the capital city of the Shakya clan where Shuddhódana was king.

KAPIÑJALÁDA a son of Vasíshtha through Aksha-mala: see note to 4.77.

KARÁLA-JÁNAKA a king from Vidéha: see note to 4.80.

KARÁNDAVA A kind of waterfowl, probably the common coot: see note to 5.53.

KARNIKÁRA the flower of the plant *Pterospermum acerifolium*: see note to 5.3.

KASHI-SÚNDARI the identity of this woman is unclear: see note to 4.16.

KUBÉRA the guardian deity of the north and the lord of wealth.

KURU a dynasty of kings of early India to which most of the major kings of ancient India belonged, including those celebrated in the epic *Mahábhárata*.

KÚRUBAKA the red Amaranth tree: see note to 4.47.

KUSHIKA an ancient king who was the grandfather of the famous Vishva-mitra: see note to 1.44.

LODHRA a small tree (*Symplocos racemosa*) about eighteen feet high with a red bark and white flowers turning pale yellow as they fade.

LOPA-MUDRA the wife of Agástya: see note to 4.73.

LÚMBINI the birth-place of Siddhártha, the future Buddha.

MADRI one of the two wives of Pandu: see note to 4.79.

MÁGADHA the major kingdom in north-eastern India (today's Bihar) during the time of the Buddha with its capital at Raja-griha, and later at Pátali-putra.

MÁGHAVAN another name for Indra.

MAHA-SUDÁRSHA mentioned as a forefather of Siddhártha at 8.62.

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MÁMATA the wife of Utáthya, the elder brother of Brihas-pati: see note to 4.74.

MÁNDARA a mythical mountain used as the churning stick during the original churning of the ocean: see MBh CE 1.16–17.

MANDÁRA the coral tree, *Erythrina Indica*, also viewed as one of the five trees of paradise.

MANDHÁTRI a righteous king who ruled the whole world (see 10.31; MANI 1975: 476). His craving for sensual pleasures is noted in 11.13. For his extraordinary birth, see note to 1.10.

MANTHÁLA GÁUTAMA appears as a seer at 4.17. Nothing else is known about him: see note to 4.17.

MANU the first man, the first king, and the first law giver. Ashva-ghosha may have been familiar either with the actual *dharma/sāstra* or legal treatise ascribed to Manu or knew the legend of Manu being the first propounder of law.

MARA the god of death, identified here with Kama, the god of love (see 1.27).

MÁRUTA his identity is unclear. At 4.74 he is said to be the father of Mámata.

MARUTS gods associated with the wind and storm, regarded as companions of Indra.

MARÚTVAT the son of Dharma by Marútvati, the daughter of Daksha.

MAYA the mother of Siddhártha, the future Buddha. Maya is also the consort of Vishnu.

MÉKHALA-DÁNDAKAS for the identity of this obscure group of people, see note to 11.31–2. The Mékalas are referred to in MBh CE VI.10.39 as one of the regions.

MERU the great mountain in the middle of the earth around which the sun revolves.

NÁGARI the name of a hermitage recorded at 12.89. No further information is available.

NÁHUSHA the father of Yayáti. Náhusha's genealogy is: Brahma, Atri, Chandra, Budha, Purúravas, Ayus, Náhusha.

GLOSSARY OF NAMES

NAIRÁÑJANA called *Nerañjarā* in Pali, this is the river near which the Buddha stayed after his Awakening. It is identified with the modern Nilájana (Lílajan), which joins the Móhana to form the Phalgu.

NALA·KÚBARA the son of Kubéra.

NÁNDANA a park in heaven, especially associated with the abode of Indra.

PADMA the great elephant of the south that supports the earth on its head: see *Rāmāyana* 1.39.16–17.

PADMA another name for Shri, the goddess of fortune and consort of Vishnu.

PADMA·SHANDA the name of a park in the Shakya capital.

PÁNDAVA the five brothers headed by Yudhi·shthira who are the main protagonists in the epic *Mahābhārata*.

PANDU the father of the five Pándava brothers in the *Mahābhārata*: see note to 4.79.

PARÁSHARA (1) the father of Vyasa; (2) probably another name for the Sankhya teacher Pañcha·shikha.

PRAJA·PATI the creator god.

PRITHU a righteous king born from the right hand of his evil father Vena: see note to 1.10.

PUNAR a particular constellation: see note to 9.11.

PURAN·DARA an epithet of Indra.

PUSHYA name of a lunar asterism.

RÁGHAVA patronymic of Rama, the descendant of Raghu.

RAHU the celestial demon responsible for the eclipses of the sun and the moon.

RÁHULA the son of Prince Siddhártha, the future Buddha, by his wife, Yasho·dhara.

RAJA·GRIHA the early capital of the kingdom of Mágadha.

RAMA the hero of the epic *Rāmāyana*, he came to be viewed as an incarnation of the god Vishnu.

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- RAMA BHÁRGAVA** also known as Párašu-rama, he killed the entire race of kshatriyas to avenge the death of his father: see note to 9.25.
- RÓHINI** one of the stars and the wife of Moon: see note to 4.73.
- RISHYA-SHRINGA** a young ascetic who was totally ignorant of the female sex: see note to 4.19.
- SÁGARA** an ancient king, whose sons were responsible for digging up the earth, which became the ocean (*ságara*): see note to 1.44.
- SANAT-KUMÁRA** one of the four mind-born sons of Brahma, sometimes identified with Skanda, who also bears the name Kumára.
- SARÁSVATA** the son of Dadhícha and the river Sarásватi. He recited the lost Veda: see note to 1.42.
- SARVÁRTHA-SIDDHA** the personal name of the future Buddha, also called Siddhártha.
- SÉNAJIT** the identity of these kings is uncertain, but several are mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*.
- SHACHI** the wife of Indra.
- SHAKRA** another name for Indra, the king of the gods.
- SHAKYA** the clan in which the Buddha was born.
- SHALA** the tree *Vatica Robusta*, renowned for its beautiful flowers.
- SHALVA** the name of a region in northern India: see MBh CE vi.10.37.
- SHAMBHU** another name for Shiva.
- SHAN-MUKHA** literally, “six-faced,” the name of Shiva’s son Skanda or Karttikéya.
- SHANTA** the daughter of King Roma-pada who married the sage Rishya-shringa.
- SHÁNTANU** the father of Bhishma through Ganga.
- SHAURI** the patronymic of Krishna; Shura was Krishna’s grandfather.
- SHIBI** the name of a famous ancient king in both Buddhist and Brahmanical mythology. His generosity was tested by gods. Indra took the form of a hawk that chased Agni (Fire) in the form of a dove. The dove sought refuge with Shibi, who refused to give him up. The hawk asked for an equal amount of Shibi’s flesh. As Shibi cut up and placed his flesh on the scale, the dove became more and

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more heavy. Finally Shibi put his whole body on the scale. The deities reveal themselves and recognize the generosity of Shibi. The story also forms the basis of a *Jātaka* tale where Shibi is identified with the Buddha in a previous life as a bodhisattva, where the gift is not of flesh but of an eye.

SHRENYA the king of Mágadha, also known as Bimbi-sara.

SHRI the goddess of fortune; it is also the sovereign power of the king personified as a divinity and viewed as the wife of the king.

SHUBHA-KRITSNA a class of Buddhist deities (Pali: *subha/kiñña*) dwelling within the realm of form (*rūp/āvacara*).

SHUKRA also known as Úshanas, he is the teacher of the *asuras* and the author of a text on political science: see notes to 1.41 and 9.10.

SHURA Krishna's grandfather.

SHÚRPAKA the name of a person identified as an enemy of fish: see note to 13.11.

SIDDHA a class of gods, also means a "perfected one:" see note to 7.1.

SIDDHÁRTHA the personal name of the future Buddha, also called Sarvártha-siddha.

SINDU-VÁRAKA the shrub *Vitex negundo*: see note to 4.49.

SITA-PUSHPA could be either *Tabernaemontana Coronaria* (or *Divaricata*), known as East Indian Rosebay (a shrub growing to about six feet in height with white fragrant clusters of flowers), or Jasmine.

SUMÁNTRA the chief minister of Dasha-ratha, the father of Rama: see note to 6.36.

SUNDA one of a pair of demon brothers, the other being Upasúnda: see note to 11.31-2.

SUVÁRNA-NISHTHÍVIN the son of King Sriñjaya: see note to 8.77.

TÍLAKA the tree *Clerodendrum phlomoides* with white flowers: see note to 4.46.

UDÁYIN the son of King Shuddhódana's chaplain (*purohita*).

ÚDRAKA also known as Údraka Rama-putra, he is the second Brahmanical philosopher to instruct the future Buddha.

UGRÁYUDHA a king killed by Bhishma in MBh CE XII.27.10.

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- UPASÚNDA one of a pair of demon brothers, the other being Sunda:
see note to 11.31-2.
- ÚRVASHI an *apsaras* who was the wife of Purúrasa: see note to 13.12.
- UTÁTHYA the older brother of Brihas-pati: see note to 4.74.
- VAIBHRAJÁ it is not possible to identify this king or god recorded in
9.20.
- VÁISHRAVANA: the patronymic of Kubéra.
- VAISHVÁNTARA the name of a hermitage at 11.73.
- VAJRA·BAHU probably an epithet of Indra, who is said to have inher-
ited the sovereignty among gods from Bali: 11.16.
- VÁLABHID an epithet of Indra.
- VALMÍKI the reputed author of the *Rámáyaṇa*: see note to 1.43.
- VAMA·DEVA a minister of Dasha-ratha, the father of Rama.
- VASÍSHTHA a great seer already recorded in the *Rgveda*. He was the
great-grandfather of Vyasa: see note to 1.42.
- VASU a group of eight gods. The term also refers to a particular con-
stellation (9.11).
- VIBHRÁJA also called Vaibhrája and Vaibhrájaka, it is a pleasure grove
in the heavens, associated by Ashva-ghosha with Indra and his
heaven.
- VIDÉHA a kingdom in the northeastern part of India ruled by the fa-
mous king Jánaka.
- VINDHYA the mountain range across northern India that divides the
northern region from the Deccan.
- VINDHYA·KOSHTHA a place in the Vindhya mountain range: see note
to 7.54.
- VISHVÁCHI listed as one of the six great *apsarases* in MBh CE 1.68.67.
- VISHVA·MITRA one of the most famous sages of ancient India who fa-
thered Shakúntala: see note to 4.20.
- VIVÁSVAT his identity is unclear: see note to 4.28.
- VRISHNI-ĀNDHAKA mentioned frequently in the epic as an allied
group of people: see note to 11.31-2.
- VRITRA a demonic being that is the chief enemy of Indra whom Indra

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killed with his bolt, the Vajra. In later myth, Vritra is viewed as a brahmin; thus the killing of Vritra made Indra guilty of the sin of killing a brahmin.

VYASA the seer to whom is ascribed the division of the Veda, as well as the authorship of the *Mahābhārata*: see note to 1.42.

YAKSHA generally a term for demons, but in Buddhist terminology refers to a class of divine beings.

YĀMUNA the second major river of north-central India, along with the Ganges.

YASHO-DHARA the wife of Prince Siddhártha, the future Buddha.

YAYÁTI an ancient king, the son of Náhusa, who reigned for a thousand years. When he reached old age, Yayáti asked his sons to give him their youth. Only one, Puru, agreed to do so. As a result, Yayáti gave his kingdom to Puru before he left for the forest. See the narrative in MBh ce 1.70–80.



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Sanskrit words are given in the English alphabetical order, according to the accented CSL pronunciation aid. They are followed by the conventional diacritics in brackets.

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